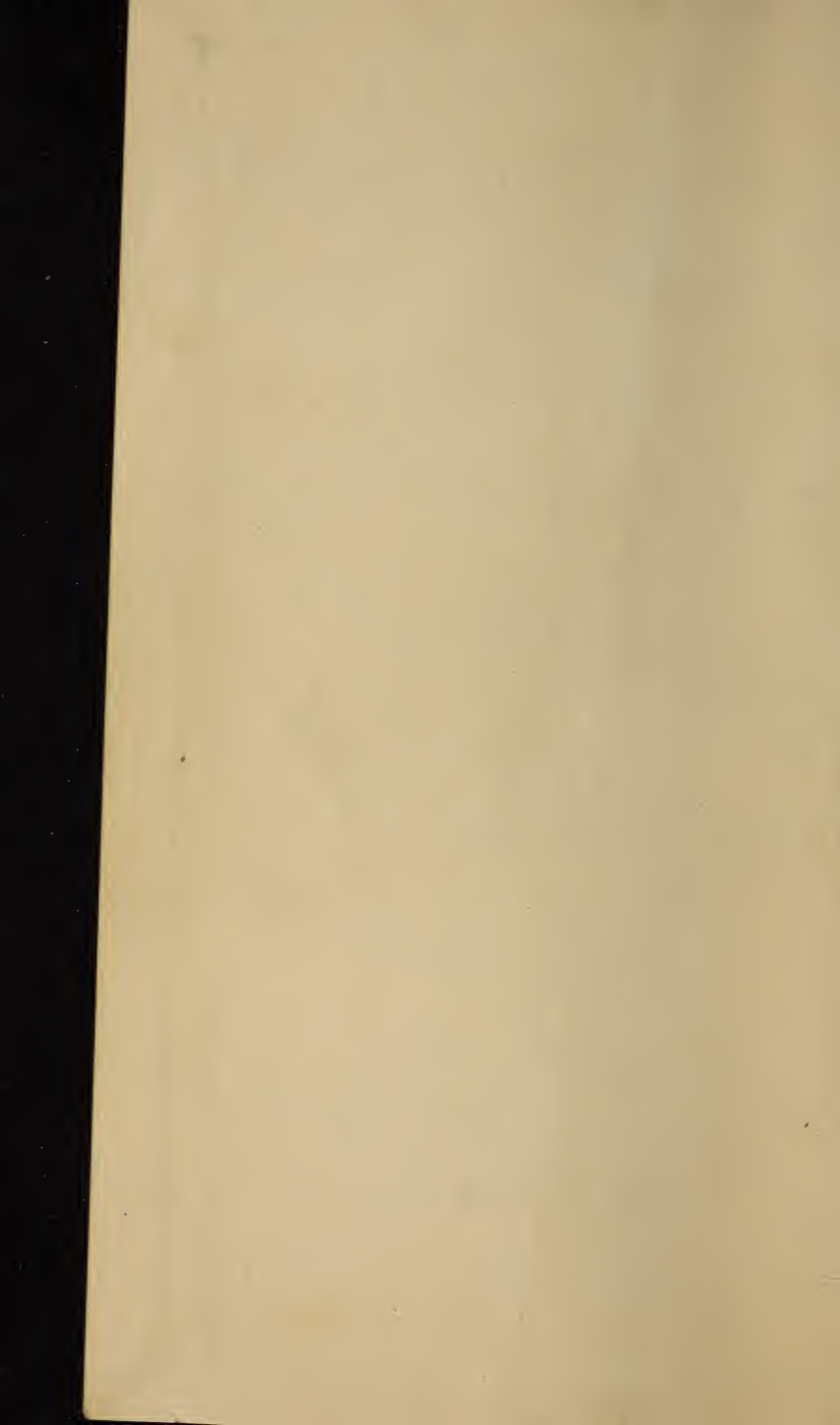




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HOFFMANN'S

STRANGE STORIES.

71

FROM THE GERMAN.

“On ne discute plus sur les modeles, on les contemple. La langue appartient au pays qui la parle, mais les idees appartiennent a l'humanite tout entiere, la langue doit être exclusive, absolue, fidele au genie de la nation; mais les idees doivent aller au plus grand nombre d'intelligences possible.”



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PUBLISHERS' NOTICE.

The publishers of this translation of **HOFFMANN'S STRANGE STORIES** have thought that a work of this character would be acceptable as an oasis in the desert of supernatural literature; and the public will doubtless find in every one of these interesting tales, sufficient food for marvel; in fact, the characteristic of this author, as may be well understood from his life, which follows, is extravagance. We quote the following:

“Hoffmann possesses, by turns, the singularity of Rabelais, the softened sarcasm of Voltaire, the exquisite sensibility of Bernardin de Saint Pierre. There is in his tales the piquant variety of Le Sage, joined to the spirit of Moliere, the caustic simplicity of Cervantes, the fineness of touch of Prevost. It is the book for every body.”

TO THE
GREAT AMERICAN PUBLIC,

THIS
TRANSLATION

OF
Hoffmann's Strange Stories,

IS DEDICATED BY

THE PUBLISHERS.

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H O F F M A N N .

Models are no longer discussed, they are contemplated. The language belongs to the country that speaks it, but ideas belong to the whole human race. The language ought to be exclusive, absolute, faithful to the genius of the nation; but ideas ought to reach the greatest possible number of minds.

D. NISARD.

Ernest-Theodore-Wilhelm Hoffmann was born in Prussia at Königsberg, the 21st of January, 1776. His father occupied for more than thirty-six years the office of attorney-general and commissioner at Insterberg. His mother was the daughter of the consistorial advocate Dœrfer, a man of rare merit, and who was long entrusted with the affairs of nearly all the noble families of Silesia. She was a woman of feeble health and of a sad and romantic imagination.

The childhood and youth of Hoffmann were passed at Königsberg, with his serious parents and two personages worthy of interest on account of the strange contrast offered by their characters: a stiff old uncle, bombastic, systematic, like the baron who figures in the tale of Fascination; and a young aunt called Sophia, a graceful mischief-maker, whom he often likes to remember, but who died in the flower of her age—a type of grace and beauty, whose every feature is reproduced in the charming creation of Seraphine. Hoffmann likes to recall the remembrance of all the beings and all the objects that he has met with during his life. Having been born poor and dying indigent, he wore out his days in a series of monotonous occupations, and the capricious escapes which he allowed to his mind in the imaginary world.

On leaving the university, he had but one friend, Hippel, who remained his Pylades, his fidus Achates until the end. Rich,

he would have cultivated the arts with an immense affection ; deprived as he was of all patrimony, his friends demonstrated to him that the study of the law could alone give him bread ; he became a law student. But he often threw aside the Pandects and the Institutes to take by turns his pencil, his bow, or his pen. The supernatural already furrowed deep wrinkles on his youthful forehead, but his friend Hippel was as yet the only confidant of his adventurous dreams. These two beings, closely united, balanced each other marvellously well. Hoffmann prepared his flight, Hippel sustained him ; one had the fire, the other the calm. Sometimes, on fixed days in the week, they admitted to this intimacy a few chosen friends, and they talked of poetry, art and love around a pot of beer or a bottle of Rhine wine. This was the origin of the Serapion club.

Meanwhile time was passing ; Hippel, nominated for judiciary functions, left Königsberg. Hoffmann became lonely and sad again. Chance developed a passion in his youthful heart ; but the difference of social position, of rank and fortune, rendered impossible all hope for the future. Hoffmann's heart was broken. He fled in his turn from Königsberg, which no longer contained for him either friend or love, and he went to Glogau to continue the study of the law. From there he went to Posen, invested with his first degree. The world then changed its aspect in his eyes. He sees it nearer, he is called upon to appreciate it,—to judge it under its various appearances. Strongly excited by everything around him, he throws aside his melancholy, sharpens his crayons, and begins to make caricatures of everything and everybody, so much and so well that a personage in high standing, more ill-treated than the others, writes to Berlin to complain of him, and raises a fatal bar to any legal career which poor Hoffmann might undertake. Meanwhile the caricatures had brought him to light, and his reputation as a wit procured for him in a short time the care of a family.

In 1804, we find Hoffmann married and counsellor to the regency of Warsaw. A new society, elegant and select,

opens before him. The resources of a great city develop his activity, and give a broader course to his studies. He connects himself with men already famous, such as Voss and Zacharias Werner: and the referendary Hitzig became as dear to him as was Hippel at Königsberg.

Hoffmann felt from that time the springs of life and the strength of intelligence redoubled within him. He composed music, made pictures and stories; a circle of celebrated people was formed about him. His position appeared stable and his future almost sure, when suddenly the French entered Warsaw, and drove out the Prussian government together with Hoffmann, Hitzig and company. The poor counsellor of the regency was sick with grief; then, when hardly convalescent and without resources, he drags himself as far as Berlin, solicits an office, and obtains nothing except rebuffs. By chance, he remembers that music may afford him some employment; his friend Hitzig succeeds in having him appointed as leader of the orchestra in the theatre at Bamberg. He sets off, his purse light, but his heart big with hope; he arrives:—but oh, fatality! the manager has gone off with the funds: the company in complete disorder no longer know upon what saint to call. Meanwhile, they must live, and to continue the representations without an orchestra, for want of money to pay the musicians, Hoffmann, instead of scratching notes, sets himself about composing a play. They play his piece, it succeeds; he gains nearly enough to keep him from starving to death. Once launched upon the sea of literature, he sends articles to the Leipzig journals: they are inserted, he is begged to continue his favors; but all this amounts to so little! Hoffmann was again about to resort to expedients, when a new manager came to Bamberg, Holbein, a man of probity, but bold, an innovator, and bent upon making a fortune or burying himself under the stage. Hoffmann, under his auspices, became machinist, architect and decorator of the theatre of Bamberg. The machine is again set in motion; it operates,—florins pour in, and parties of pleasure flock from all parts. But one of Holbein's caprices destroys this castle;

he goes, and misery comes back to stand sentinel on the stage of the abandoned theatre. Hoffmann, driven to extremity, sells his last coat to enable him to wait until his friend Hitzig, his second providence, forwards him his commission as leader of the orchestra at Dresden. Now at Dresden, things go on no better than on his arrival at Bamberg; but, to console him, he finds there his faithful friend Hippel, and friendship makes him forget his misfortunes for a time.

We are in 1813; the dogs of war are let loose; Talma is playing French pieces at Dresden, and Hoffmann is working on the opera of Undine, and at the same time making caricatures for the bookseller Baumgartner, getting poorer from day to day. In 1814 his friend Hippel, who has made his way, reappears, and who, faithful to his attachment, does not give himself a moment's rest until he has caused the recall of Hoffmann to Berlin, where he finds Hitzig, and continues his functions of counsellor at the regency.

Here, then, ought to commence for him a new existence. Seven years of calm, are they not sufficient to heal the wounds that fate has cruelly made? Is it not time for Hoffmann to enjoy a little of the comforts of the fireside and the success of public life? Well, no! his destiny must be accomplished, like that which devotes to martyrdom whoever bears upon his forehead the sign of genius. Besides, the misery of the past has undermined his vital strength. To this prostration of the organs is joined attacks of paralysis of the extremities; then the invasion of a frightful malady, the spine disease, comes to render his situation without remedy and without hope of recovery. He vegetated five months in unspeakable suffering, which he bore with the resignation of a stoic. In the last days that preceded his death, the physicians tried to reanimate him by the application of cauterization to each side of the back bone. Hitzig having come to visit him a short time after one of these painful operations, Hoffmann asked him "if he had not smelt, on entering, an odor of roast beef:" then he related in detail the proceedings of the doctor, adding,

“That he imagined that they wished to stamp him, for fear that he should pass, as contraband, into paradise.”

We read, in the excellent biography published by Mr. Loève Weimars, “that Hoffmann was small of stature; had a bilious complexion, thin nose, and arched, thin lips, dark hair, nearly black, which almost covered his forehead. His gray eyes had nothing remarkable in them when he looked tranquilly before him; but he sometimes gave them a tricky and scornful expression. His thin form was snugly built; his chest was broad and deep. In his youth, he dressed himself with care, without ever becoming elegant. Later he took much pleasure in wearing his counsellor’s uniform, which was richly embroidered, and in which he resembled very nearly a general of the French army. What was the most striking in his person, was an extraordinary mobility, which increased when he was narrating. He spoke with great volubility; and, as his voice was husky, it was very difficult to understand him. He ordinarily expressed himself in short dry phrases. When he spoke of art and literature and became animated, his elocution was abundant and harmonious.

Hoffmann read badly: when he came to effective passages, he took an affected tone, taking good care to throw a glance among his auditors, as if to assure himself that he was understood, which habit often occasioned them much embarrassment. It was pretty difficult to form acquaintance with this strange man, but he was a firm friend. He did not like the society of women, and the hatred that he had sworn towards learned women often made him exceed the bounds of politeness.—When an authoress had the misfortune to make advances to him and came to seat herself near him at table, he took his plate and carried it to the other extremity. As for the men, he gave the preference to those who amused him, that is to say, to those who were quick at witty repartee, and knew how to relate anecdotes, or who took pleasure in listening to him. When he received company at his own house, Hoffmann was extremely pleasant. He bore then, with angelic patience, whims and follies which would have put him to flight under

any other circumstances. His humor was of the most variable character : in his journal he has left a quantity of expressions by which he designated the different dispositions of mind that he remarked in himself ; here are a few of them : romantic and religious humor ; exalted humorous humor, resembling madness ; exalted musical humor, romantic humor disagreeably exalted, capricious excess, purely poetic, very comfortable, stiff, ironical, very morose, excessively depressed, exotic, but miserable ; “ The purely poetic humor, in which,” said he, “ I felt a profound respect for myself.”

Hoffmann was continually possessed with an idea which furnishes us in some measure with a key to his works. He had the conviction that evil is always hidden behind the good ; or, as he expressed himself, that the devil had a hand in everything. His soul was continually a prey to fatal forebodings ; he saw all the frightful figures that appear in his works, near him when he wrote ; so that it often happened that he awoke his wife in the middle of the night, to beg of her to sit up in bed with her eyes open whilst he wrote. His writings bear the stamp of truth ; in general there are few poets who offer so strong an identity with their creations.— The same writer who described terrible effects with so powerful an energy, excelled in satire and caricature, and he repaid himself for the terrors that shook his soul, by contemplating the mad creations that his imagination gave birth to, in his moments of calm and gaiety. Hoffmann attached no value to those of his productions in which the two distinctive qualities of his mind were not produced, as, for example, *The Cooper of Nuremberg*, the best of his works. His reading was very limited ; he knew only the poets of the first class, and troubled himself very little about the new literature of the day. He drew the subject of his narrations from his imagination, from old chronicles, or from observations made in taverns and other places of resort that he frequented. The criticisms of the journalists caused him no emotion, and he rarely read them ; the criticisms of his friends alone had any value in his eyes.

On the first appearance in France of the *Strange Stories*, the singularity of the work made a rapid fortune ; but as a fatal law wills that to every genius a persecution is attached, those who called themselves the interpreters of Hoffmann miserably derided him ; caricature nailed him, like another Silenus, astride a beer barrel ; it enveloped him in the nauseous vapor of the bar room, it covered him with stains of wine, and, to shut out his book from good company, it made it the product of drunkenness and debauchery. It is time to protest against this odious lie, which had deceived Sir Walter Scott, at the same time the whole public, who are too ready to be deceived. The man the ignorant and jealous critics have so often calumniated, died the 25th of June, 1822, in the flower of his age, counsellor at Berlin. His life, destroyed by the long suffering of an acute disease, was extinguished in the midst of his wife and several friends, who yet live to honor the memory of the magistrate, the genius of the poet, and the souvenir of the virtues of the citizen.

Hoffmann was a man who knew life by experience ; he had labored and suffered ; he had exhausted, like many others, his part of the illusions of life. At the time he commenced writing his stories, he had lived three quarters of the time allotted to man ; it was in 1814 ; the storms are passed, his position is assured, his rank is surrounded with honor and consideration ; Germany has consecrated his genius as a writer ; fame comes to him like glory, both dearly tax his leisure. But Hoffmann predominates over the world, he disdains its praises, he looks forgivingly on its seductions. Formerly he hated it for its hardness, now he sees it with its bitterness, with its ridiculousness, and he laughs at it. Retired henceforth into the circle of a few chosen men whose hearts have never betrayed his affections, with Chamisso, Contessa, Hitzig and doctor Koreff, he makes himself another world, of which they are the elect. Amongst them is organized the Serapion Club, thus called from the name that figured that day in the calendar. It was in those reunions that Hoffmann liked to exhaust his strangest inspirations.

Pour him out some prince's wine, let a flow of Johannisberg tint his glass with golden reflections, and the poet's imagination sets off at a gallop, like the courser who carried Burger's Leonora ;—then springs forth all the train of strange beings, children of his wandering thoughts, that appear when he calls them, come, grow and range themselves before him. It is a drama that he raises between heaven and earth ;—it is his world, peopled with personages whose secret he alone possesses. Pour out for the poet a flow of Johannisberg, and his thought, so many times trodden down by the dry pre-occupations of daily labor, so many times ruffled by trust deceived, becomes illumined with a magic brilliancy ; the scene becomes enlarged, all the arts furnish their part to the work ; painting brings its lively colors ; music its trembling vibrations ; poetry its secret treasures. Pour out Johannisberg, and life fires the drama ! Advance on this new earth, amongst these personages that you have nowhere seen, and that you seem nevertheless to recollect ; all the most diverse emotions will surprise and fascinate you.

Listen to the melancholy echo of Antonia's Song, immediately you are bursting with laughter at the relation of the Lost Reflection ;—then a delicious curiosity drags you on to the last page of the Walled-up Door ; farther on, all the spirit, all the elegance of the age of Louis XIV. shines in the description of manners which serves as a frame to Cardillac the Jeweller ;—do you wish for comedy in real life, read the Agate Heart :—do you wish for the strange in its highest perfection, take Coppélius or Berthold the Madman. At whatever page the book is opened, there is instruction for things in life. By the side of the wanderings of a burning imagination, is found at every line an observation of the world, which mingles all the delicacy of a criticism in good taste with the traits which prove the most intimate acquaintance with the human heart :—the moral deduction is never separated from the marvellousness of the form.

*Meister Martin, der Cooper, in dem
Scapione-Büchlein I
Hempfl's ed. I p. 187 ff.*

Hoffmann's Strange Stories.

THE COOPER OF NUREMBERG.

(Meister Martin)
The Cooper's trade is noble;
And may his companions be,
Love—pure, chaste and stable;
Wine—generous, rich and free.

I.

At the commencement of the month of May, in 1580, the respectable society of coopers, of the free city of Nuremberg, celebrated, according to an ancient custom, the annual feast of its institution. A short time after this solemnity, one of the chief men, clothed with the title of *Master of the Candles*, having departed this life, they thought of choosing his successor. The voices in favor of master Martin were unanimous. Master Martin yielded to no one in all that concerned his profession. He knew marvellously well how to make casks, both elegantly and strongly, and understood how to organize a cellar according to the best rules. His well known reputation increased his custom, entirely composed of rich and distinguished people; and, thanks to luck, which had favored all his enterprises, he enjoyed a very considerable fortune for a man in his station.

When the election of master Martin was known and proclaimed, the counsellor Jacob Paumgartner, who presided over the assembly, arose and said—"You have done perfectly well, my dear friends, in choosing master Martin for one of your chief officers, for this dignity could not be conferred upon

a man more capable of exercising it. Master Martin enjoys the general esteem, and all those who know him bear witness to his skill. Notwithstanding his riches, he has preserved the habit and taste for labor. His whole conduct is a model worthy of being offered to you. Let us salute our dear master Martin, and let us congratulate him on the unanimous choice which honors and rewards in his person a whole life of probity and labor."

On finishing this discourse, Paumgartner arose and advanced several steps towards the subject of it, his arms stretched out as if to embrace master Martin. But the latter, rising only for good manners, and very much embarrassed by his corpulence, returned the salutation of the counsellor with very little ceremony, and fell back into his arm-chair, without appearing to care much for the brotherly embraces of Jacob Paumgartner.

"Ah, so, master Martin," continued the counsellor, "are you then not satisfied with being elected by us Master of the Candles?"

The cooper, throwing back his head, and patting gently with both hands his ample paunch, appeared to collect himself in the midst of the silence of the company; then taking up the conversation—"Well, my worthy friend," said he to Paumgartner, "how should I not be satisfied with the justice that is done me! And what man, I pray you, is such an enemy to himself, as to disdain the legitimate price of the efforts he has made? Is the tardy debtor, who comes some day to settle the whole or part of an old account, chased from the door? What has been, my dear friends," continued he, turning towards the assembly, "the motive which has inspired you with the idea of choosing me? What duties shall I have to perform? Will it be necessary, to justify the honor of your choice, to know pertinently every detail of our trade? I flatter myself with having given proof, in constructing, without the assistance of fire, my mammoth tun, a masterpiece known by you all! Will it be necessary, to please you more, to add to

this goods and money? Come to my house, I will open to you my chests and closets; I will satiate your eyes with the pleasure of counting a mass of bags of gold and vessels of silver, of no trifling weight. If to flatter your vanity, the newly elected Master of the Candles ought to receive the humble respect of the lowly and the consideration of the great, ask the first of the citizens of our good city of Nuremberg, ask of the noble bishop of Bamberg what opinion they have formed concerning master Martin. I do not fear, God be thanked, either comparison or criticism."

Hereupon master Martin, satisfied with the speech that he had just improvised, threw himself back in his arm-chair, and patting again his big belly; he threw around him glances that called for applause; then, seeing that his audience remained dumb, except some slight attacks of cough, which signified pretty distinctly the discontent of some of his fellow members, he added some few words to bring back the minds that his pride had just wounded.

"Receive," said he to them, "my very sincere thanks for a choice which honors you; for you have all felt that the dignity of Master of Candles ought justly to reward the man who has raised to such renown the respectable society of coopers. You all know that I shall zealously fulfil the duties that are laid out for me. Every one of you will find in me a counsellor and an assistant. I shall defend as my own the privileges of all; and to seal the compact of devotion which ought to unite us, I invite you to a friendly banquet which shall take place on Sunday. It is in joyfully tasting some old flagons of Johannisberg, that we will agree upon measures to be taken, with one consent, to assure protection to the general interest."

This gracious speech produced a marvellous effect. All faces were radiant, all voices broke out into noisy acclamations, which raised to the clouds the capacity, the merit and the liberality of master Martin. Each one came in his turn to embrace the new Master of the Candles, who allowed it to

be done by some without making too many grimaces, and who even deigned to grant to some the favor of extending to them his horny hand.

II.

The worthy counsellor, Jacob Paumgartner, had to pass the house of master Martin to go to his own. On arriving before the cooper's door, Jacob, after a sign of farewell, was about to continue his road, when master Martin, taking off his fur cap, and bowing as low as his enormous obesity would allow, addressed him in these words—"Could I not have the honor of receiving, for a few minutes, in my humble domicile, my worthy friend the counsellor? I should be too happy if he would do me the favor to allow me to enjoy more of his esteemed conversation."

"By my faith, master Martin," answered Paumgartner, "I will very willingly make a short stay under your roof; but, truly, you are too modest in speaking of what belongs to you, as if we did not know that your *humble* domicile, as it pleases you to call it, is more amply furnished than any other with quantities of furniture and objects of value, whose variety and elegance are the envy of the richest citizens of Nuremberg; and I lay a wager that there is not a great lord who would not be glad to possess such a jewel."

Now there was no exaggeration in the praises lavished on the cooper's abode; for as soon as the door was open, the peristyle, of exquisite architecture, already offered the graceful effect of a little fanciful room. The floor was figured in wood mosaic very artistically put together; the pannels of the wood work enclosed paintings which were not without merit, and chests, sculptured by the best workmen of that epoch, stood along the walls. It was, at the time we see these two personages enter, suffocatingly hot; a sultry and heavy atmosphere oppressed the breathing on reaching these apartments. For

this reason, master Martin conducted his guest into a room disposed in such a manner that a current of fresh air circulated unceasingly through it ; this room resembled a dining room ; it was garnished with the furniture and plate necessary for splendid feasts. On entering, the sonorous voice of master Martin called Rosa. This was the only daughter of the proprietor of the dwelling.

Rosa made her appearance immediately. All the beautiful creations of Albert Durer could not give the idea of so perfect an assemblage of feminine graces. Figure to yourself a waist supple and frail as the stalk of a white lily—cheeks in which the rose was mingled with the alabaster—a mouth ornamented with every seduction—a look impressed with a mysterious melancholy, which hid itself under long eyelids, surmounted by ebony-hued eyebrows, and shone like the soft reflection of the May morn—hair running in silky waves on her alabaster shoulders,—and you will only have a faint idea of all the attractions of this young and interesting person, who looked more like an angel than a woman. You would have thought that you saw alive the beautiful Margaret of Faust, whose ideal the painter Cornelius has so well represented.

The charming Rosa made a childlike salutation to her father, and took his hands, which she kissed with a respect full of tenderness. At the sight of this sweet creature, the face of old Jacob was covered with a warm tint of red, and the almost extinguished fire of his antique youth struck some sparks from his embers, long since grown cold. The honorable counsellor was re-animated for an instant, as the pale ray of the setting sun colors, before fading away, with a last flame-tint, the embrowned foliage of an autumn landscape. “ Surely,” exclaimed he, “ master Martin, you have there a treasure which is singly worth all those that your house contains ; and if our old beards tremble with pleasure when we look at such sweet attractions, we must not be astonished at the effect produced by them upon youth. I am sure that your Rosa causes many distractions at church among the youth of

the neighborhood, and that in the parties frequented by the young girls, gallantries and bouquets are for her alone ! And I engage, that to marry her to whoever is best in Nuremberg, you will only have, dear master Martin, the embarrassment of choice."

Instead of listening with pleasure to the praises of the counsellor, master Martin frowned discontentedly, and after having ordered his daughter to bring a flagon of his best Rhine wine, he said to the ardent Jacob, who watched Rosa as she retired, red as a cherry, and with her eyes modestly lowered—"You are right, counsellor ; I confess that my daughter is endowed with remarkable beauty ; and I add, that she possesses besides, other precious qualities. But you must not speak of those things before a young girl. And as to the best in the city of Nuremberg, I think little of it, truly, as far as regards choosing a son-in-law."

Rosa, who re-entered at this moment, placed on the table a flagon and two crystal glasses superbly cut. The two old men took seats at the table facing each other, and master Martin was pouring into the glasses his favorite liquor, when the step of a horse rang on the pavement before the house. Rosa ran to see who it was, and came back to announce to her father that an old nobleman, named Heinrich of Spangenberg, wished to speak to him.

"Blessed be this day !" exclaimed the cooper, "since it brings to me the noblest and the most liberal of all my customers. It is undoubtedly concerning some important order. Heinrich of Spangenberg, is a man who deserves a good reception."

Saying which, master Martin ran to meet the new comer, as fast as his old legs would allow him.

III.

The wine of Hochheim sparkled in the Bohemian crystal, and the three personages soon felt a new life diffuse itself within them. Many a sprightly story was given forth by them without too many scruples, to such a point that the chest of master Martin floated on his enormous belly, here and there, giving vent to tremendous bursts of laughter. The counsellor Jacob himself felt his parchment face unwrinkling.

Rosa was not long in entering the room with an elegant willow basket, from which she drew a table-cloth, as white as snow. The table was laid in the twinkling of an eye, and master Martin's dinner had a very inviting appearance. Paumgartner and Spangenberg could not take their eyes from this admirable young girl, who invited them, in her sweetest voice, to partake of her father's repast, which she herself had prepared; and master Martin, buried in his arm-chair, with his hands clasped, contemplated her with the pride of an idolizing father. As she was about retiring discreetly, the old Spangenberg sprang from his seat with the quickness of a young man, and seizing the young girl by her waist, he exclaimed, his eyes moistened with tears—"Oh, dear angel! Oh, child of heaven!" Then he pressed to his lips, twice or thrice, the forehead of the beautiful maiden, and sank back into his seat, a prey to a sad pre-occupation.

The counsellor Jacob proposed to drink a full glass in honor of Rosa. "I tell you, master Martin," exclaimed he, "and the worthy lord Spangenberg is assuredly of my opinion, I tell you that Heaven has made you a priceless present in giving you this beautiful daughter; and I already see her, in a near future, the wife of some high personage, with a string of pearls on her forehead, and a splendid carriage covered with the most illustrious blazonry."

"Indeed, gentlemen," continued master Martin, "I do not understand the warmth that you show in speaking of a

thing about which I do not trouble myself. Rosa is hardly eighteen years of age, and truly, at this age, a daughter ought not to think of quitting a father for a husband. God only knows what awaits her in the future ; but I can answer for, as a man assured of the fact, that no noble or citizen, were he rich in mountains of gold, would have the slightest right to the hand of my daughter, if he had not given proof before all of the most finished skill in the labors of the profession I honor, and which I have followed for a half century. All that I ask of him, besides that, is to obtain the love of my daughter, whose inclination I will never force."

Spangenberg and the counsellor fixed their astonished gaze upon master Martin. "So then," said one of them, after a pause, "your daughter is condemned to marry no one except a mechanic, a journeyman cooper?"

"God wills it," replied master Martin.

"But," said Spangenberg, "if the master of another profession, or an artist already celebrated by his works, should ask of you her hand, and if your daughter loved him, how would you decide?"

"My young friend, I should say to this spark," replied master Martin, throwing himself back in his chair, "show me for masterpiece a fine mammoth tun like that which I made in my youth. And if he could not satisfy so legitimate a desire, I would not positively turn him out of doors, but I should desire him, very politely, never to step his foot into my house again."

"Nevertheless," replied Spangenberg, "if the young lover replied to you humbly that he could not offer you such a piece of workmanship, but that this magnificent house, which rises with pride at the corner of the market-place, was built after his plans, certainly a like labor would be worth as much as the workmanship of any other profession."

"Well, for heaven's sake, my worthy guest," exclaimed the cooper, "do not give me ideas which are of little use at this time, and to which I would accord, in any case, very little

credit. My wish is that the husband of my daughter should practise my profession, and honor it, as I have done; for I hold that it is the first trade in the world. Hooping a cask is not all; the spirit of the calling consists in knowing how to manage and improve generous wines. To make a regular cask, it is necessary to calculate and guage; then a very skilful hand is necessary to bring together the staves and tie them solidly. I am the happiest man in the world when I hear from morning to night the klipp, klapp, klipp, klapp, of the mallets of my joyful workmen; and when the work is finished, is polished, is made elegant, and when I have nothing more to do than to apply the master's sign, truly I am proud of my labor, as God must have been of the creation. You speak of the trade of architect; but when the house is built, the first rustic who sleeps upon money can buy it, establish himself in it, and from his balconies laugh at the artist who is passing by in the street on foot. And what answer shall he make to the rustic? Instead of which, in our handiwork we lodge the most generous, the noblest of creatures. Long live wine and casks; I see nothing beyond them!"

"Approved!" said Spangenberg, finishing his glass;—"but all the good and fine things that you have just said do not demonstrate that I am so much in the wrong, nor that you are wholly in the right. I suppose now that a man of illustrious race and princely nobility comes to ask your daughter. There are times in this life, master Martin, when the most stubborn minds reflect many times before letting certain opportunities escape which are not lavished."

"Very well," cried master Martin, half rising, his eyes on fire, his neck stretched out, his voice short and quick—"well, I should say to that gallant, of illustrious race and princely nobility—My good sir, if you were a cooper, we might talk with you; but—"

"But," interrupted the old nobleman, who persisted in not losing the thread of his idea—"but if some day a young and brilliant lord came to you, surrounded by all the pomp that

his riches and rank might give him, and if he besought you with entreaties to give him your little Rosa?"

"I would shut doors and windows in his face, and I would triple bolts and bars," howled master Martin; "and I should tell him through the key-hole, Go farther, my fine lord; it is not for you that the roses in my garden bloom. My cellar and my ducats are very much to your taste, I am sure, and you will do my little daughter the honor to accept her into the bargain? March on, march on, my gallant!"

These words made the color mount into the face of the old nobleman. He leaned on the table, appeared to meditate a few instants, then he added, his eyes down, and in a grave voice, through which appeared, as if in spite of himself, a certain emotion—"Master Martin, you are inflexible in this affair; but let us learn your last word. I suppose that the young lord of whom I have just spoken to you, to be my son, and that I accompany him to you to sustain his demand; would you shut your door in our faces, and would you think that we were attracted by the charms of your cellar and your ducats?"

"Heaven forbid that I should ever have such an idea of you, my worthy lords," replied the cooper. "I would give you an honorable welcome, such as you merit; and I should put myself at the disposition of such respectable visitors. As for my daughter, I repeat to you—But, truly, I ask you, what is the use of killing time by solving such singular questions? We forget our filled glasses, in discussing things neither of the time, nor of our age. Leave here, I beg you, imagining sons-in-law and the future marriage of Rosa, and let us drink to the health of your son, who is said to be the most gallant youth of Nuremberg."

The two talkers touched glances with the counsellor Jacob Paumgartner, who had long listened to their conversation without putting in a word. Spangenberg added constrainedly—"Do not believe, master Martin, that all we have said is in the least serious; it is on my part pure pleasantry; for

you well understand that my son, unless he become madly in love with some little girl, cannot and ought not to choose a wife except from the bosom of some noble family. There was no occasion for proving so warmly that your Rosa could not suit him, and you could have, it seems to me, manifested less bitterness in your answers."

"Truly, I hasten to tell you as much," replied the cooper quickly. "I was joking, as you were. As for the bitterness which you reproach me with, it does not exist; and if I have some pride, pardon it, I beg you, for my position. It is the pride of the trade. You will not find in the whole country a cooper of my capacity, practising his profession without charlatanism, and without caring for criticism; and this flagon which we have just emptied, and which I am ready to replace, is the best guarantee of my knowledge of how to live."

Spangenberg answered no farther; he appeared mortified, or under the influence of very deep reverie. The wise counsellor Paumgartner tried to lead the conversation to other subjects. But, as it happens, after an ardent debate, the minds too much on the stretch are suddenly relaxed; something feverish, without their knowledge, ran in the veins of these three men. Suddenly the old Spangenberg, leaving the table, called his servants, went out of master Martin's house without taking his leave, and without speaking of coming back.

IV.

Master Martin saw him go in this manner with some regret; and as Paumgartner was also about to retire—"Do you know," said he to him, "that I cannot explain to myself the grieved look of that worthy gentleman, Heinrich Spangenberg?"

"Dear Martin," answered the counsellor, "you are the best man that I know, and you ought certainly to think well

of the business which has procured you riches and honor. But take care that this sentiment does not mislead you sometimes. Already, this morning, in the assembly of the masters of the corporation, you have spoken in a manner to make you more than one enemy. However independent you may be, is it generous to abase others? See now what has just happened to you. You little thought, doubtlessly, of taking for other than pleasantry the words of Spangenberg; and yet with what bitterness you have called the people of the nobility, who might think of the hand of your daughter, avaricious fortune hunters. Could you not have answered him, what would have been more suitable and truer, that such a proposition coming from him, would have destroyed your most decided prejudices? You would have parted in a much more agreeable manner, and without leaving anything to wound more, some day, what you call your principles."

"At your ease, my dear counsellor," answered master Martin. "I agree that I may have been wrong; but why did this diabolical man pull, as it were, the words from my throat?"

"But still," continued Paumgartner, "what urges you to make your daughter marry a cooper by force? Is this not to wound the holiest laws of nature, to wish to limit the circle of the affections of a young girl? And do you not fear that there will proceed from it for you and for your child, the most deplorable results?"

"Yes, I feel now," replied the cooper, shaking his head; "I see that I ought to have told you the truth immediately. You think that my resolution not to accept any one for son-in-law except a cooper, comes from an exaggerated love for my profession. No, it is nothing of all that; I have a hidden motive. Seat yourself there, my dear Jacob, and listen to me, whilst drinking this flagon that, in his ill-humor, Spangenberg has left full. Touch glasses, I pray you; do me this favor."

Paumgartner understood nothing of the graciousness with

which master Martin loaded him. It was a thing so contrary to his habits, that he had indeed every reason to be surprised. Master Martin did not leave him time to think much of it, and commenced the following narration :

“ I have sometimes told you that my poor wife died in giving birth to Rosa. With her then lived, if it can be called living to exist thus, an old relative bowed down by infirmities, and besides all, paralytic. One day Rosa was sleeping, tended by her nurse, in the chamber of this old relation, and I was contemplating this dear child with sad and mute melancholy, when my looks were turned towards the poor sick woman ; but seeing her so calm, so motionless, I began to think that she was not, perhaps, much to be pitied. Suddenly I saw her thin and wrinkled face become highly tinted with purple. She raised herself, extended her arms with as much facility as if a miracle had cured her, then she articulated these words— ‘ Rosa, my good Rosa ! ’ The nurse gave her the child, and figure to yourself the surprise I felt, mingled with fear, when the old woman sang, in a voice clear and vibrating, a song after the fashion of Hans Berchler, the innkeeper at Strasbourg :— ‘ Tender child, with cheeks so blooming, Rosa, listen to my counsel. Dost thou wish to preserve thyself from suffering and care ? Have no pride, criticise no one, and guard thyself from vain desires. Listen to my words, if thou wishest that the flower of happiness should bloom amongst thy days, and that God should grant thee his blessing ! ’

“ After having sung several couplets in the same manner, the old lady laid the child on the coverlid, and passing over her little angel’s head her bony and wrinkled hand, she murmured several words that I did not hear ; but her attitude announced that she was praying. Then she fell back again into a stupor, and at the moment when the nurse went out of the chamber with the child, she breathed her last breath without agony.”

“ That is a strange story,” said Paumgartner, after having listened to the relation of master Martin. “ But explain to

me, I pray you, what connection can exist between the song of your old relation and the future of Rosa, that you so obstinately hold to making her the wife of a cooper."

"How is it that you do not understand," exclaimed master Martin, "that the modest virtues recommended to Rosa, cannot be met with more certainly than in a family of good and honest work-people? The old woman also spoke in her song of a neat house, of perfumed waves, and little angels with wings of fire. The neat house could not have more elegance than a cask made as a masterpiece by a master workman; the perfumed waves are the generous wines with which is filled the masterpiece of the cooper; and when the wine sparkles and ferments, the bubbles that rise from the bottom, do they not seem to you like little angels with enameled wings? That is really, I assure you, the sense of the mysterious words muttered by the old woman; and as this explanation suits me, I have decided that Rosa should marry no one but a cooper."

"But," continued the counsellor, "do you believe that it is sufficient to interpret thus vain words, instead of allowing yourself to be guided by the inspirations of Providence, that always knows much better than we ourselves what is suitable to our happiness? And I add, that it appears just and wise to me, to leave to the heart of your daughter the care of seeking a husband worthy of her."

"That is all nonsense," exclaimed master Martin, striking the table with his fist. "I tell you, and I repeat, that Rosa must be the wife of the best cooper that I can discover."

The counsellor Jacob Paumgartner would willingly have got angry with the singular obstinacy of master Martin, but he had the good sense to restrain himself, and rising to take his leave—"The hours gallop," said he to his host; "let us leave our empty glasses and our discussions, which are little less so."

As they were going out of the house, the one to retire, and the other conducting him, they perceived a young woman

with five little boys. "Oh, heavens!" exclaimed Rosa, "Valentine is dead, for there are his wife and children!"

"What do I hear?" said master Martin. "Can Valentine be dead? Oh, what a frightful misfortune! He was the most skilful of my workmen, and the most upright one that I have ever known. He wounded himself with his adz several days ago. The wound became inflamed; gangrene came to aid the fever, and the poor devil dies in the flower of his age."

Then comes the disconsolate wife, complaining to see her children doomed to misery.

"How then," exclaimed master Martin—"how can you think that I will abandon you after your husband has died in my service? Not so, good woman; it shall not be as long as master Martin lives, and as long as God preserves his fortune. You all belong to my family from this day. To-morrow you will go and establish yourself, with your children, in my farm house outside of the Frauenthor, and I will go and see you every day. You will take the management of my house, and I will bring up your boys so that they will become good and substantial workmen. You have still an old father who worked well in his time. If his strength no longer allows him to do much labor, he can always be useful in some manner. Take him with you, then; you will all be welcome."

At these words the poor widow felt so much joy, that she was near fainting. Master Martin pressed her hand affectionately, whilst the little children, whom Rosa was loading with caresses, clung to him on all sides. The counsellor Jacob Paumgartner could not restrain a big tear.

"Master Martin," exclaimed he, "you are a singular man; and in whatever humor we find you, there is no such thing as being angry with you."

And they separated.

V.

On a verdant lawn, from whence the eye loses itself in the distance amid the flowery horizon, do you see that fine young man seated in the simple costume of a laborer, which takes nothing from his good looks? Frederick is his name. The sun is half plunged into the purple of evening, and its last rays sprinkle with ruddy flames the vault of the sky. In the distance spring into the air the fretted spires of the royal city of Nuremberg. Silence reigns in the deserted country. The shadow lengthens, and comes nearer and nearer. The young workman is leaning on his travelling bag, and his animated look seems to interrogate the depths of the valley. His careless hand plucks the petals of several pinks, and suffers them to be carried away by the breath of the breeze. Then his eyes gradually veil themselves and become sad; his chest rises, swelled by a secret emotion, and tears escape, drop by drop, from his half-closed eyelids. But a sudden thought gives him courage and strength; for he raises his head, opens his arms as if to clasp a cherished being, and his fresh and pure voice improvises one of those little simple songs that the children of old Germany imagine so well:

Oh country, ever sweet,
My eyes dost thou greet?
From thee far away
Could my faithful heart stay?

From thy warm-tinted sky,
The clouds seem to fly;
And roses so sweet,
Seem to fall at my feet.

My heart bounds with joy,
That love will not cloy,
For each step brings me near
To the rose I hold dear,

My love messengers be,
To her I would see,
Sweet twilight of gold!
Sweet evening star bold!

To the rose that I cherish
Carry joy that will nourish ;
For her that I burn,
Take the kiss of return.

Should I die ere her I see,
And she asks for me,
Say that in her love perished
Is the heart that she cherished.

When Frederick had sung, he took from his wallet a little piece of wax, softened it with his breath, and moulded with his fingers a pretty hundred-leaved rose ; and whilst doing this delicate work, he repeated, in a low voice, the couplets of his song, without noticing another young man standing before him, and very attentively examining his work.

“ Well, truly, my friend,” said the new comer, “ that is a charming work that you are doing there.” Frederick raised his eyes, and fixing on the stranger a look of sweet and calm expression—“ How can you, my dear sir,” said he to him, “ find any merit in what is to me nothing but a passing amusement ? ”

“ The devil ! ” continued the unknown ; “ if you call amusement the work that you are now doing with such piquant perfection, you must be some artist of high renown. I am doubly charmed with the chance that has caused our meeting, for I am moved by the delicious song that you were warbling after the style of Martin Haescher ; and I admire besides the address with which you sieze the ideal of form. How far do you think of going this evening ? ”

“ The destination is before us,” answered Frederick. “ I am returning to my country ; I am going back to Nuremberg. But the sun is setting, night is falling, and I am going to seek for shelter in the next village. To-morrow’s dawn will find me on the way to Nuremberg.”

“ Let us then finish the trip together,” exclaimed the unknown. “ We will share the same lodging to-night, and to-morrow we will enter Nuremberg together.”

At these words Reinhold, for that was the name of the young man, threw himself on the grass by the side of Frederick, and continuing his questions—"Are you not," said he, "an artist goldsmith? I suppose, after what I have seen you model, that you generally work in materials of gold and silver?"

"Alas, my dear sir," answered Frederick, without raising his eyes, which were fixed on the earth, "I am neither worthy of the fine name of artist, nor capable of executing what you suppose. I am nothing, I must tell you, but a poor journeyman cooper, and I am going to Nuremberg with the hope of working with a master whose renown is spread throughout Germany. Instead of moulding or chiselling figures, I simply make cask hoops."

"Well," exclaimed Reinhold, "do you believe me stupid enough to disdain your profession? One confidence is well worth another; know then that I also am a cooper."

Frederick questioned by a glance the person who thus spoke to him; for the equipment of Reinhold resembled but little the costume of a journeyman cooper. His black small clothes were of fine stuff, with velvet slashes. A broad and short sword hung by his side, and his head-dress was a cap ornamented with a long floating feather. It would have been said, on seeing him, that he was some rich merchant; and yet there was in his whole person I know not what of eccentricity and extreme freedom, that silenced such a supposition.

Reinhold, understanding the doubt of Frederick, took from his travelling bag a cooper's apron and an adz—"Look here, my friend," said he to Frederick; "dost thou still think that I have lied, and that I am not a simple workman like thyself? I conceive thy surprise at seeing me thus splendidly costumed; but it will immediately cease, when I tell thee that I come from Strasburg, where all the journeymen coopers are dressed like princes. Formerly, I sought strenuously to get out of the rut, and enter the adventurous career of art; but I am well cured of that fancy, so far that now I see nothing above

my calling of cooper; and I have even attached to it hopes for the future. But thou, comrade, of what art thou thinking? Thy face is sad, and thy look seems to fear to near the future! Thou wast just singing with a feeling of melancholy, and I believed, under the empire of a singular fascination, that thy soft accents came out of my own breast to pass into thine. It might be said that thy heart opens before me like a book. Give me thy whole confidence; and since we are going, both of us, to fix ourselves at Nuremberg, let us form together, from this moment, a union of solid friendship."

Frederick threw his arms round the neck of his new friend.

"Yes," continued he, "the more I look at thee, the more I feel my sympathy increase. In the depths of my heart vibrates a sweet voice which seems to answer to the sweet call of friendship. Oh! I wish that my soul might mingle with thine; for there is in life things that the heart alone understands—pains which it alone has the means of softening;—listen, then, to the history of the few events that have taken place during my life. From early youth I had dreamed for myself the glory of the artist. I aspired to the happiness of equalling in the art of moulding and chasing metal, master Peter Fischer, or Benvenuto Cellini. I made my first attempts under the instruction of Johannes Holzschuer, the most celebrated worker in silver in my country. This master was frequently visited by master Tobias Martin, the cooper, who brought with him his daughter, the delicious Rosa. I became enamored of this young girl, without being able to explain to myself the mystery of this passion. I quitted my country, and I went to Augsburg, to accelerate the progress of my apprenticeship; but hardly was I separated from her who had taken possession of my heart and all my thoughts, than I had constantly before my eyes the celestial image of Rosa. Labor became painful to me. I no longer had more than one study, that of reaching the felicity that I dreamed of. At last the news having reached me that master Martin had announced that he would only give his daughter to the most

skilful cooper in the city, I renounced my vocation of artist, to become a workman. I have now come back to Nuremberg to beg master Martin to accept me as one of his journeymen. But the nearer I approach to the fulfilment of my wishes, and the more I think of Rosa, who must be much improved by this time, timidity and the fear of being refused, struggle in my soul ; for I know not if I am loved, or if I can ever hope to be."

Reinhold had listened to the story of Frederick with mute attention. When this confidence was ended, he spoke ; but his features expressed a painful anxiety, which he tried in vain to conceal. "Is it true," said he at last, "that Rosa has never given you any pledge of affection?"

"Never!" exclaimed Frederick. "Rosa was only a child when I left Nuremberg. I can suppose, without vanity, that I was not disagreeable to her. When I plucked for her the finest flowers in Mr. Holzschuer's garden, she always thanked me with angelic smiles ; but"——

"There is then a gleam of hope for me!" exclaimed Reinhold, with an explosion of vivacity which made his friend tremble. His tall figure straightened, his sword rattled by his side, and his eyes flashed.

"For heaven's sake!" asked Frederick, "what is passing in thy mind?"

And before this face, then so sweet, and now so violently agitated, he could not avoid a shudder ; and, making a step backwards, he struck his foot against Reinhold's travelling bag. This shock sounded a mandolin that was tied to the baggage.

"Accursed companion!" cried Reinhold, throwing at him a savage and threatening glance. "Do not crush my mandolin!"

And immediately taking the instrument, he struck the strings with a violence that might have broken them ; then suddenly a reaction took place in his movement ; he became

calm after this fever fit, and hanging the mandolin on his back, he held out his hand to Frederick.

“Let us go, dear brother,” said he affectionately—“let us go to the neighboring village. I have a sure remedy to chase away the phantoms that might attack us on the road.”

“Well, my friend, of what phantoms could we be afraid? Let us descend into the valley, and sing, sing on! I feel unspeakable pleasure in listening to thee.”

Myriads of brilliant stars studded the sombre blue of the sky. The night wind rustled the high grass; the brooks ran murmuring along their borders, and the voices of the solitude were prolonged like sighs from an organ under the dome of the forests.

Frederick and Reinhold slowly descended the road that conducted to the village. When they reached the inn, Reinhold, throwing aside his travelling gear, pressed Frederick to his heart, and wept long and earnestly.

VI.

The following day, Frederick, on awaking, no longer finding his new friend lying by his side, thought that he had perhaps changed his route, when Reinhold reappeared suddenly before him, his bag on his back, but in a different costume from that which he had worn the evening before. He had taken from his cap the long floating feather, no longer wore his short sword, and a sack of very common stuff and color replaced the elegant doublet which had set off the beauty of his form.

“Well, brother,” exclaimed he, “wouldst thou take me now for a good and hearty workman, such as I wish to be? But for a lover, thou hast, it seems to me, slept famously. Look and see how high the sun is already. Come quickly—some courage, and more legs!”

Frederick, absorbed in thoughts of the future, hardly answered the words of Reinhold, who, completely electrified by a

strange joyousness, talked at random, throwing his cap into the air, and capering like a mad man. When they approached the city, Frederick became still more serious, and stopping suddenly, he exclaimed—"No, I cannot really go another step! Sadness weighs upon my heart, and I can no longer support it. Let me seek a short repose under these trees."

On saying this, he threw himself on the ground, as if annihilated. Reinhold seated himself by his side, and began to talk of the night before.

"Last evening," said he, "I must have given you a strange surprise. When you related to me your love adventure, and when you deplored the uncertainty of the future, I felt myself an agitation which I could not explain. My brain was in a ferment; I should have become mad, if, when I met thee, thy sweet patriotic song had not calmed me as if by a miracle. This morning I awoke joyous and cheerful; the phantoms which had possessed me yesterday are vanished, and I have recovered calmness and serenity of mind. I no longer remembered any thing but the lucky chance which led to our meeting; and I think of nothing more than cultivating the friendship which I had conceived for thee at first sight. Friendship is a gift from heaven, whose fruits are invaluable. I wish in this connection to relate to thee a touching event which took place, several years ago, in Italy, at a time when I made a short stay there myself. Listen attentively:

"There was a noble prince, a friend to art, and an enlightened protector of true talent, who had put up for competition a considerable prize for the best painting of a very interesting subject, the details of which were surrounded with difficulties. Two young artists, who were united by the most tender affection, and who lived and worked together, presented themselves to dispute the prize. They placed in common, to tempt success, all that they possessed of imagination and practical science. The eldest, endowed with great aptitude for drawing and composition, drew the sketch almost instantaneously. Before the bold stroke of a mind powerful to create, the

youngest felt discouraged, and he would have abandoned his brushes, if his friend had not sustained him by energetic counsels. When they had commenced to paint, the youngest took his revenge from the first day, by the delicacy of his touch and the fineness of his coloring, which he carried as far as the most experienced artists could have done. There resulted from this association of two talents, that the youngest of the two friends placed at the exhibition a picture of exquisite perfection of drawing, and the eldest for his part had never before produced any thing more delicately executed. When the two pieces were finished, the two masters threw themselves into each other's arms, congratulating themselves on the success which they had promised each other. The youngest obtained the prize.

“ ‘Oh!’ exclaimed he, ‘how can I accept the golden laurel! What would be my solitary work without the counsel and touches of my friend!’ ”

“ And the eldest answered him—‘Hast thou not also aided me by thy advice? We have united in each of our works all that we both possessed of experience and imagination, for the purpose of arriving at success. The triumph of one of us is not a defeat for the other. Glory always covers two friends like us with the same crown.’ ”

“ The painter was right, was he not, Frederick? Can jealousy ever find access to noble souls? ”

“ Oh, no! ” exclaimed Frederick; “ thus our friendship dates from our first meeting; and, in a few days, the same labors will occupy us in the same city. Who knows but that soon we shall rival each other as to who shall make the best, without fire, a fine mammoth tun, as masterpiece of an accomplished journeyman! May God preserve from all low envy the one of us that shall receive the prize for the work! ”

“ What say you? ” continued Reinhold, with joyful vivacity. “ But I wish that each one of us shall help the other. And truly I give you notice, that for all that relates to drawing, to the science of measuring and guaging, you will find in

me positive guidance ; more than that, as regards the choice of woods, you can rely upon me. I will guide thee in thy work with devoted zeal, without fearing that my masterpiece will be less perfect, because I shall have communicated to a friend the secrets of my art."

"Well, my dear Reinhold," interrupted Frederick, "why are we talking now of masterpieces and rivalry? Has the time arrived for contending for the beautiful Rosa? Truly, all my ideas are stirred up in my poor head!"

"And who, then, speaks to thee of Rosa?" said Reinhold, with a burst of laughter. "I believe that you are dreaming with your eyes open. Come, we are not yet at our journey's end."

Frederick took the road again, and they reached the nearest inn, at the entrance of the city.

"To whom shall I offer my services?" said Reinhold.

"I know no one there, unless, dear brother, you will conduct me to master Martin."

"Oh, thanks for that thought," answered Frederick, hastily. "Yes, we will go together and find master Martin. I feel that with you I shall have less fear, and I shall be less troubled in re-entering that house."

The two friends, after having equipped themselves like respectable working men, went from the inn to go and visit master Martin. That day was the precise Sunday fixed upon by the rich cooper to celebrate by a banquet his election to the respectable office of the master of the candles. It was towards noon when our young travellers entered his house, which resounded with the clinking of glasses and the joyful conversation of the guests.

"Unfortunate moment!" exclaimed Frederick.

"On the contrary," said Reinhold; "it is in the midst of joy excited by generous wines, that men are most accessible, and I engage that master Martin will give us a good welcome."

At this moment, master Martin, to whom their presence had been announced, came towards them, his walk a little

unsteady, and his cheeks sufficiently rubicund. He immediately recognized Frederick—"It is thou, my fine boy," exclaimed he; "thou hast returned again. That is well; that is well. Hast thou learned the noble profession of cooper? I remember that the mad master Holzschuer pretended, when I spoke to him concerning thee, that thou wast formed for carving figures and balustrades, like what are seen here in the church of Saint Sebald, and at Augsburg in the house of Fugger. But all those stories had very little effect on me, and I congratulate thee on having chosen for thyself the good calling. Be then a thousand times welcome at my house."

Speaking thus, master Martin closely embraced him. Poor Frederick felt his courage return in the arms of the cooper, and he hastened to profit by this fortunate opportunity to solicit the admission of himself and companion into the workshop of master Martin.

"Be thou still more, and both of you, welcome," added the cooper, "for at this moment work is coming in from all quarters, and good workmen are rare. Throw down your travelling bags, and come into our banquet; dinner is nearly at an end, but we shall yet find for you some scraps, and Rosa will take charge of you and treat you well."

They all three entered the dining-room. All the venerable masters of the society of coopers were joyfully seated at tables presided over by the worthy chief, Jacob Paumgartner. These gentlemen were at dessert, and Rhine wine sparkled like gilded wares in goblets of great capacity. The conversation was very animated, and interrupted by hearty bursts of laughter, which made the glasses tremble; but when master Martin appeared, with the two companions whom he wished to present, all eyes were turned towards the new comers, and silence reigned as if by enchantment. Reinhold threw an assured glance around him; but Frederick, his eyes cast down, felt his heart ready to fail him.

Master Martin placed the two friends at the end of the table; and that place, the humblest a moment since, became

immediately enviable, when the pretty Rosa came and seated herself between the two guests, busily occupying herself in offering them the best wines and the most delicate viands.

Frederick, by the side of this delicious creature, could hardly restrain his emotion ; and, with his eyes fixed upon his plate, as yet full, for he was too much in love to swallow a single mouthful, he said in his soul a thousand tender things to his beloved. As for Reinhold, he was a free liver, very attentive to the attractions of the young girl, and very prone to become affected by them.

Rosa could not refrain from feeling a secret pleasure in listening to the details of his journey. It seemed to her that she saw appear, under real forms, all the events of his life that he related. Her heart allowed itself to be captivated involuntarily by the charm of this eccentricity of character, and she had not the strength to withdraw her hand, which Reinhold had taken several times, and pressed in a very significant manner.

Meanwhile Frederick, incited by his friend, had drunk a full goblet of Rhine wine. The heat of this liquid mounted to his brain, and loosened his tongue ; he became more animated, and his blood circulated more freely.

“ O God ! how happy I feel ! ” exclaimed he suddenly. “ I feel an ineffable joyfulness ! ”

The daughter of master Martin could not restrain, at these words, a malicious smile.

“ Rosa ! ” continued Frederick, “ can I dare believe that you have borne me in remembrance ? ”

“ How could I have forgotten you ? ” answered the young girl. “ I remember the dear days of my early childhood, when you liked to play with me ; and I have kept with great care that little basket made of silver wire, that you gave me one Christmas eve. ”

“ O Rosa, my beloved ! ” exclaimed Frederick, beside himself, his breathing accelerated, and his eyes flashing.

“ I awaited your return with much impatience, ” continued

Rosa. "But when I think of the pretty work that you formerly executed under master Holzschuer, I cannot imagine or understand how you have quitted the career of artist to become a journeyman cooper in my father's workshop."

"But that is on your account," interrupted Frederick enthusiastically. "It is for you alone that I have made this sacrifice."

He had hardly uttered these words, when he blushed and trembled as if something had escaped him which he ought not to have said. There was, certainly, a little imprudence in this confession so unseasonably uttered.

Rosa, who had very well understood him, lowered her glance, blushed, and remained silent, until, by a lucky chance which relieved her from her embarrassing position, master Jacob Paungartner, knocking on the table with his knife, to command silence, announced that master Vollrad, the most celebrated singing master in the city, was about to sing a song.

Master Vollrad immediately arose, coughed, spit, blew his nose, struck a position, then sang, in a full and sonorous voice, a national song, composed by Hans Vogelgesang. All the guests felt as if electrified, and Frederick himself regained his youthful assurance.

After the singing master had sung several pieces, in various styles, he invited some of his friends to follow him. Reinhold took his mandolin, and after having sweetly preluded, he sang the following words :

The cooper's trade is noble,
And may his companions be,
Love—pure, chaste and stable ;
Wine—generous, rich and free.

Where is the little spring,
Whence comes the generous wine ?
It from the glorious cask they bring,
And call its taste divine.

Who makes the precious cask,
For the cherished little spring ?
That always was the cooper's task,
And glory may it always bring.

When the cooper drinks his wine,
From his goblet both rich and rare,
The bubbles upon the wine do shine,
And the journeyman claims his share.

The cooper's trade is noble,
And may his companions be,
Love—pure, chaste and stable;
Wine—generous, rich and free.

Applause, loud and long, drowned the voice of the singer ; but no one in the audience appeared to be better pleased than master Martin. And without listening to the jealous comments of Vollrad, who exerted himself to prove that Reinhold's method had some of the imperfections of Hans Muller, he filled and raised as high as he could the largest festive goblet, and cried out—"Come here, my good companion and joyful singing master, come and take a drink from the cup of master Martin."

Reinhold obeyed ; then, returning to his place, he told Frederick, in a whisper, to pay for his entertainment by singing the song which he had sung the night before.

"The devil take the mad man !" growled Frederick with a gesture of impatience.

But Reinhold, without taking notice of it, rose and said aloud—"My venerable masters and lords, here is my dear brother Frederick, who knows better than myself a crowd of ballads and songs, with which he would regale you, if his throat was not a little dry from the dust that we have met with on our route ; it shall then be, if you will permit it, for your next meeting."

At these words, all began to compliment Frederick. There were even some honest people, who took a notion, without having heard it, to set a higher estimate upon his voice than upon the talents of Reinhold.

Master Vollrad, who had just engulphed an enormous goblet, pretended that Reinhold's method resembled too much the insipid Italian style, and that Frederick's alone preserved the natural German stamp.

As for master Martin, he threw himself back in his arm-chair, according to his old custom, and striking with little measured blows his belly, swelled like a balloon, he exclaimed, "Here are, gentlemen—here are, indeed, my companions, the joyful table and workshop companions of master Tobias Martin, the most celebrated cooper in Nuremberg!"

The company found no objection to make to this declaration; and after having drowned in the bottom of their goblets the little that remained to them of reason and solidity of leg, they staggeringly separated to go to their beds. As for Frederick and Reinhold, master Martin opened a very gay little chamber for them in his house.

VII.

After several weeks of trial and labor, master Martin noticed in Reinhold uncommon skilfulness in the art of measuring and calculating with the assistance of dividers and lines; but he was a feeble workman for the labor of the workshop, whilst Frederick was indefatigable. For the rest, they were both commendable for their good conduct. From morning till night, they charmed the hours by joyous songs, of which Reinhold possessed a rich store; and when Frederick, privately catching sight of the pretty Rosa, suddenly took a saddened tone, Reinhold immediately sang these joking words—"The cask is not a lute—the lute is not a cask!" and old master Martin, who did not see the meaning, often remained with his arm raised, without striking, and laughing heartily. But the little Rosa, who understood more, knew well how to make a thousand and one excuses to come into the workshop. One fine day master Martin entered his workshop with a care-worn look. His two favorite workmen were adjusting a cask. He stopped before them with his arms folded.

"My good friends," said he to them, "I am very well satisfied with you and your labors, and yet I am very much

embarrassed. They write me that the harvest of Rhine wine must exceed this year all that has ever been known before ; a famous astrologer has predicted the appearance of a comet, whose heat must produce a marvellous fertility ; the fruits of the vine will be increased a hundred fold, and that this surprising meteor will not appear again in three hundred years. You can judge of what an enormous quantity of work is about to flow into my workshop. And even now, the venerable bishop of Bamberg, the greatest epicure in Germany, has sent me an order for an immense tun. We shall never be able, by ourselves, to execute all the jobs which will be offered us ; and I must really engage another workman, skilful, zealous and active, like yourselves. God preserve me from getting here any fellow of whom I am not very sure. What is to be done, then, when time presses, and we wish to be well served ? Can you not point out to me some clever fellow of your acquaintance ? From whatever distance it is necessary to bring him, and whatever sum it costs me, I am ready for it."

Master Martin had hardly finished this speech, when the door of the workshop was burst open, and a tall, broad shouldered young man cried, in a stentorian voice—"Hallo ! is this master Martin's workshop ?"

"Undoubtedly this is the place," answered master Martin, himself going towards the stranger ; "but you could have entered, my boy, without acting as though you meant to break every thing, and above all, don't scream so loudly. That is not the way to come into people's houses."

"Ha, ha, ha !" continued the young man, laughing heartily. "You are, perhaps, Martin himself ; big belly and double chin, bright eyes and ruby nose ; that's it, exactly ; the description given me is the most exact. Master Martin, I salute you with veneration !"

"And what the devil do you want of master Martin ?" asked the cooper ungraciously.

“I am,” replied the young man, “a journeyman cooper of some merit, and I want work.”

Master Martin started back, struck with surprise at seeing so stout a workman present himself in his precise time of need. He examined the new comer, and, pleased to find him so vigorously formed, he hastened to ask him for the certificates of the masters with whom he had worked.

“I have nothing of that kind with me,” replied the young man; “but in a few days I will send for them; at present I think it quite sufficient to give you my word as an honest and good workman.”

And without giving master Martin time to seek for an answer, the young journeyman, going to the end of the workshop, threw into a corner his cap and his travelling bag, exclaiming, in a decided manner—“Let us see, master Martin, what shall I begin with?”

Master Martin, very much surprised at this uncereemonious manner, which did not seem to admit of the possibility of a refusal, reflected a few minutes; then, addressing the stranger—“Comrade,” said he to him, “since you are so sure of yourself, give me an off-hand proof of your skill. Take an adz, and shave and finish polishing the hoops that are to encircle this hogshead.”

The stranger workman did not wait for a second bidding, and in the twinkling of an eye the trial job was perfect. “Well,” said he, then, with his joyous laugh—“well, master Martin, do you still doubt my skilfulness? Now, then, I should like to examine a little the quality of the tools that are used here.”

Speaking thus, he moved them about, examining each article in its turn, with the eye of a connoisseur. “Master,” said he, from time to time, “what is this hammer, I pray you? Is it not one of your children’s toys? And this little adz, is it not for the use of the apprentices?” At the same time whirling in his powerful hand an enormous hammer, which Reinhold could not have used, and which Frederick

could hardly lift ; he handled with the same ease master Martin's adz. Then continuing his feats of strength, he made a pair of heavy tuns spin round with the same ease that he would have handled simple barrels. At last, taking in both hands a solid stave which had not been thinned by the shave—"This," exclaimed he—"this is good oak, and that ought to snap like glass ;" and suiting the action to the word, he broke the stave as easily as if it were a shingle, on the edge of the grindstone.

"By the relics of Saint Sebald, stop there, if you please, my friend !" exclaimed master Martin. "Would you not, if I let you, break the bottom of this big tun, and split to pieces my whole workshop ? Why don't you sieze that beam and beat the whole house into ruins ! And don't you wish me to get for you, as a shave, the sword of Roland, the knight, which is kept at the City Hall of Nuremberg !"

"Truly yes, if you please," answered the young man, casting on master Martin a glance full of fire ; but he immediately lowered his eyes, and continued in a softer voice—"I only thought, dear master, that you might have need, for your heavier work, of a vigorous workman, and I have, perhaps, exceeded in your eyes the bounds of propriety. I beg you will pardon me, and allow me to remain with you, to labor as rudely as you may be pleased to require."

Master Martin grew more and more surprised. The sudden calmness of the young man produced on him an undefinable sensation. He could not tire with looking at his regularly beautiful features, which shadowed forth a soul of the purest honesty. He thought he could discover, in his physiognomy, some resemblance with that of a man whom he had formerly known and venerated, but whose remembrance only recalled to him a remote likeness. He at last acceded to the entreaties of the young workman, with the condition that he should immediately produce the recommendations of the masters with whom he had learned the trade of cooper, and received the first degree.

Whilst this affair was being arranged, Reinhold and Frederick were finishing their hogshead, and began to hoop it; at the same time, to lighten their labor, they sang one of Adam Puschmann's songs. But immediately Conrad, (thus the new workman called himself,) sprang from the bench, crying out—"What is this charivari? One would say that a million mice were besieging the workshop! If you will meddle with singing, try at least to do it in such manner as to give us heart to labor. I could give you an example of what is necessary for that."

And, in his stunning voice, Conrad began to howl a hunting song, crowded with choruses, which ended with hallo and huzza. Now he imitated the barkings of a pack in full cry, then the cries of the huntsmen, with such force that the house trembled. Master Martin stopped his ears, and the children of dame Martha, the widow of Valentine, who were playing in the workshop, ran and hid themselves behind a pile of chips. At the same time Rosa came, much frightened, and not knowing what misfortune could have occasioned these unheard-of bellowings.

As soon as Conrad perceived the beautiful young daughter of master Martin, he stopped short in the middle of his song, and going towards her, he said to her, in the noblest manner and the softest tone—"Oh, my charmer, what heavenly light has illumined this poor workman's cabin since you entered! Oh, if I had known that you were so near, I should have taken good care not to wound your delicate ears by my wild song. Hallo, you others!" continued he, addressing himself to master Martin and the two journeymen; "can you not silence your mallets for a moment, whilst this dear young girl is among us? We ought to hear nothing but her sweet voice, and we ought no longer to think of any other occupation than that of hearing her will, and obeying it humbly!"

Reinhold and Frederick exchanged a look which sufficiently signified the discontent that this address occasioned them. As for master Martin, he burst into a laugh, according to his

praise-worthy custom, and answered—"Zounds, Conrad, you appear to me the most singular screech-owl that ever put foot into my house. You commenced here by threatening to crush every thing under your ill-bred giant foot, then you stun us with your barking, and, to crown all your follies, you treat Rosa like a princess, and you use towards her the manners and fine words of a great lord! I believe, indeed, that a madman's cell would suit you better than my workshop."

"Your dear daughter," replied Conrad, without appearing to be offended by this cutting reproach—"your dear Rosa, my worthy master, is, I can assure you, the most graceful and the noblest creature in the universe; and Heaven grant that she will deign not to remain insensible to the homage of the most gallant heir of noble race, who will place at her feet his tender love and armorial bearings!"

Master Martin held his sides with both hands, but in spite of his efforts, a homeric laugh seized him, and he rolled on the bench like one possessed; then when he had regained strength to articulate—"At thy ease, good journeyman," exclaimed he; "give to my Rosa the most precious names that thou canst imagine; I place no obstacle in the way, on the contrary; but I beg thee not to lose a blow of thy hammer, for here work is before gallantry."

Conrad felt this reprimand pierce his heart like a red hot iron; his eyes flashed like lightning, but he restrained himself, and answered coldly—"It is true!" Then he returned to his labor.

Rosa had seated herself by the side of her father, on a little barrel, that Reinhold had just scraped to give it a more advantageous look, and Frederick had just gallantly approached.

Master Martin begged his two favorite workmen to recommence, for the benefit of Rosa, the little song that Conrad had so rudely interrupted. The latter remained silent, and no longer appeared to have eyes for any thing but his work.

When the song was finished, master Martin continued the conversation, and said—"Heaven has given you a fine talent,

my dear companions ; you cannot imagine to what excess I carry the passion for singing. I formerly had some serious inclination towards the profession of singing-master, but nothing succeeded with me, and I only obtained as the fruit of my labors, jokes and jeers ; for at one time I sang in a false key, or out of time ; and when singing correctly, by chance, I always mixed up the melody. Now, then, I am very glad to see that you do better than your master ; and I should be very glad to acknowledge that the workmen of Tobias Martin have succeeded, where he had failed. Next Sunday, the singing-master will give a concert in the church of Saint Catherine. You will both of you be able to co-operate at it in a very brilliant manner, for a part of the time will be devoted to strangers, who wish to be heard before a discriminating public. So then, master Conrad," continued master Martin, turning to his third workman, if your heart leads you to desire to gratify them with your wild song, you will be able to do it quite at your ease."

"Why do you laugh at me, dear master?" answered Conrad, without raising his eyes. "There is a time for every thing, and I count on passing the time that you devote to the concert, in rambling through the flowery meadows."

What master Martin had foreseen happened. Reinhold mounted the stage, and sung several pieces to the satisfaction of all. When Frederick followed him, he threw on the assembly around him, for several minutes, a long and melancholy look, that went to Rosa's heart. Then he sang, in a gracefully modulated voice, a song of Heinrich Frauenlob, which was enthusiastically applauded, for all the singers immediately recognized how much the young stranger excelled them all.

When night came, and the concert was ended, master Martin, charmed with the success of his two favorite companions, allowed them to accompany him with his daughter to a flowery lawn, which was on the outskirts of the city. Rosa walked slowly and gracefully between the two young men. Frederick,

proud of the praises which had been lavished on him in her presence by the singers, made bold to slip into her ear some sweet expressions, whose amorous intentions were easily guessed, but of which, from modesty, the young girl appeared not to understand the true meaning. Instead of listening to Frederick, she apparently attended to Reinhold, who pushed audacity or freedom so far as to take possession, without ceremony, of the prettiest little arm that ever a feminine creature owned.

On arriving at the meadow that served on that day as the object of their promenade, they found groups of young men practising all kinds of games of exercise, in which physical strength decided the victory. Shouts and hurras came continually from the crowd of spectators. Master Martin, curious like the rest, elbowed his way through the crowd, to get a nearer view of the conqueror who received these ovations. It was no other than his workman Conrad, who took all the prizes in the race, at wrestling, and in throwing the bar. At the moment master Martin approached, Conrad, raising his voice, challenged the most skilful of his rivals to a bout of fencing. Several combats took place, in which Conrad always had the advantage ; so that he carried off, without exception, all the honors of that day.

The sun was setting ; the rosy flames of the dawning twilight extended themselves like a bar of gold in the horizon. Master Martin, Rosa, and the two journeymen coopers, were seated in a circle near a sparkling fountain, which spread freshness and fertility on the green. Reinhold related a thousand remembrances of brilliant Italy ; but Frederick, buried up in himself, kept his eyes fastened on those of Rosa. Now here is Conrad, who approaches them slowly, like a man who has a project, but hesitates about putting it into execution.

“ Well, Conrad, come here,” cried out master Martin to him, as soon as he saw him. “ You have had fine and joyful success in all the physical games, and I sincerely congratulate you. I like to see my journeymen distinguish themselves in

any thing. Come, then, and place yourself there, quite near us."

Conrad, instead of being touched by this cordiality, threw on his master a proud and disdainful glance, and said—"It was not you that I sought here, and you can believe that I should have no need of permission to seat myself near you, if I wished to do so. I have to-day vanquished all those who tried to wrestle with me, and I wished to supplicate your beautiful young daughter to grant me, as the price of my victories, the perfumed bouquet which reposes on her bosom."

Saying this, he humbly bent his knee before Rosa, whom he gazed at with fiery glance. "Beautiful Rosa," said he to her, "do not refuse me this trifling but precious favor."

Master Martin's daughter could not resist this prayer, so courteously made. "A knight of your merit," answered she, "ought to receive some souvenir from the lady of his thoughts. I will let you take this bouquet, but see how its flowers are already faded!"

Conrad covered the flowers with burning kisses, and attached them to his cap, in spite of master Martin, who appeared to be annoyed by these familiarities. "Come, come," exclaimed he, "let us quit this folly, for it is time to regain our home."

Master Martin took the lead. Conrad took the young girl's arm with a hasty gallantry, which singularly differed from his habitual manner. Reinhold and Frederick followed, with a cold and sullen look. Every one seeing them pass in this manner, said—"See there! that is the rich cooper, Tobias Martin, and his worthy journeymen."

VIII.

From the dawn of the following day, the pretty Rosa alone, seated near the window of her little chamber, sweetly meditated on the preceding evening. Her work of embroidery had

slipped from her lap to the ground ; her white hands, blue-veined, were joined as if for prayer ; and her charming head was bent upon her bosom. Who could say where her thoughts were wandering at this moment ? Perhaps she thought in an innocent dream, still listening to the tender songs of Reinhold and Frederick ; or perhaps she liked better to see handsome Conrad, kneeling and asking, with so ardent a look, so caressing a voice, the price of the victories he had gained in yesterday's games. Now the lips of the young girl murmured some notes of a song, then they allowed to escape, by syllables obscured by a half slumber—"Do you wish for my bouquet ?" At this time a practised eye would have surprised on her cheeks a reflection rosier than ordinary. Beneath her eyelids, nearly closed, he would have seen a rapid glance make her dark lashes tremble ; he would have guessed the secret of the sigh that swelled her slender waist. But just then dame Martha, the widow of Valentine, entered the little chamber, and Rosa, suddenly awaking to her remembrance, took the occasion to relate to her, with all its details, the feast of Saint Catherine, and the evening's walk in the flowery field. When she had finished this important recital, dame Martha said to her, smilingly—"I hope that you are happy, my dear Rosa ; here are three fine gallants, from among whom you are free to choose."

"For heaven's sake !" exclaimed the young girl, blushing in her fright—"for heaven's sake, what do you tell me ?—I, three gallants !"

"And why not ?" replied Martha ; "is it with me that it is necessary to make a mystery concerning a thing that is apparent to the eyes of every body ? Do you think that it is not well known, at present, that the three journeymen of master Martin have conceived a violent passion for you ?"

"Oh, what do you tell me !" interrupted Rosa, hiding her face in her hands, whilst the tears came into her eyes.

"Come, my dear child," replied Martha, drawing Rosa towards her ; "come, my good Rosa, do not hide the truth

from me ; it cannot be that you have not perceived that these three young men forget their work as soon as you are near them, and that their mallets miss the blow, because they cannot take their eyes from you. Do not young girls immediately guess these things ? Do you not well know that Reinhold and Frederick keep their finest songs for the time that you come to work by the side of your father ? Have you not remarked the sudden change that takes place in the rude manners of the savage Conrad ? Each one of your glances makes one happy and three jealous. And then, is it not very sweet to feel one's self beloved by three fine young men ? And if you should come some day and say to me, caressingly—‘ Dame Martha, advise me—which of these pretty wooers most deserves my heart and hand ? ’ do you know, dear Rosa, what answer I would make you ? I should answer—‘ Choose the one you prefer ; ’ there you will find happiness. For the rest, if I had to discuss their merits, Reinhold pleases me, Frederick also, Conrad equally ; and in one or the other of the three, nevertheless, I find defects. When I see those three fine journeymen work so heartily, from morning till night, I think, in spite of myself, of my poor departed Valentine, and I say that if he was not so skilful at his trade, he devoted himself to it much more seriously. You would never have seen him occupy himself with any thing except shoving his plane, or forming good staves ; whilst the three new journeyman of master Martin, have the appearance to me of people who have imposed upon themselves a voluntary task, and who are patiently hatching a project that I do not yet guess. For the rest, my child, if you believe me, Frederick should be your chosen one. I believe him generous and frank as sterling gold ; and then it seems to me that he is simpler, and that his language, his manners, his appearance, are more like those of our class of people. And then I like to follow in him the slow and silent progress of his timid love ; he has the candor and timidity of a child. He dares hardly raise his glance to meet yours. As soon as you speak, he blushes.

Those qualities, my dear, are better than other more brilliant ones; and this is why I feel a sympathy for this young man."

Whilst listening to dame Martha speaking thus, Rosa could not restrain the two big tears that had for some moments stood in her eyes. She arose, and turning her back to Martha, went and leaned her elbows on the window sill. "I certainly like Frederick," said she, pouting; "but does Reinhold seem to you so little worthy of being noticed?"

"Ah, truly," exclaimed dame Martha, "I must confess that he is the handsomest of the three. I have never seen such sparkling eyes as he has when he looks at you; but there is in his whole person something strange and affected, that causes me an indescribable uneasiness. I say to myself that such a workman does too much honor to the workshop of master Martin. When he speaks, one would believe that he heard soft music, and every thing that he says carries you out of real life; but if one reflects on what he has said, one is forced to confess immediately that one has understood nothing of it. For my part, I consider him, in spite of myself, a being of a nature entirely different from ours, and made to exist in another state of life. As for the third, the savage Conrad is a mixture of pretension and pride, which disagrees singularly with the leather apron of a simple workman. Each one of his gestures is as imperious as if he had the right to command here; and, in fact, master Martin, since he has been here, has not been able to help yielding to his ascendancy, and to bend before his iron will. However, in spite of this inflexible character, there is not a better or more honest man than Conrad; and I will go so far as to say, that I should prefer this rudeness and this wildness, to the exquisite elegance of the manners of Reinhold. That fellow must have been a soldier, for he knows too well how to handle arms and practise various difficult exercises, to have been until now an obscure workman. But how is this, dear Rosa; you are quite absent, and a hundred leagues off from what I am telling

you. Come, then, once more I ask you, which of these three gallants would you prefer for a husband?"

"Oh, don't ask me that," answered the young girl. "All that I can tell you, is, that I do not judge of Reinhold as you do."

At these words dame Martha arose, and making a friendly sign to Rosa with her hand—"All is said," continued she. "Thus it is Reinhold who will be the husband; that changes all my ideas."

"But I beg of you," cried Rosa, following her to the door, "I supplicate you to neither believe nor suppose; for who can know what the future will be? Let us leave the care of it to Providence."

For several days, quite a new activity animated the workshop of master Martin. To fill all the orders that came in, it had been necessary to enlist apprentices and journeymen, and from sunrise until sunset, the noise of the mallets made a stunning bustle. Reinhold had been entrusted with the calculation of the guage of the great tun ordered by my lord the prince, bishop of Bamberg. After this labor of reflection and intelligence, Frederick and Conrad had lent him the aid of their hands; and the work, thanks to their zeal, had arrived at so great a degree of perfection, that master Martin was beside himself with joy. The three journeymen occupied themselves, under his superintendence, with the hooping of it; the mallets arose and fell in measure. Old Valentine, the grandfather of the little orphans, shaped the staves, and the good dame Martha, seated behind Conrad, gave a portion of her time to the family work, and a portion to watching her babes.

The work was so noisy, that they did not hear old Johannes Holzschuer enter. Master Martin, who first perceived him, went to meet him, and asked him what he desired.

"Two things," answered Holzschuer; "first, I wished to see my old pupil, Frederick, again, whom I see working there so bravely. Afterwards, I came to beg of you, dear

master Martin, to construct for my cellar, one of the largest size tuns. But I see that you are just finishing one which would exactly suit me ; tell me your price for it."

Reinhold, who was about going to work again, after a few minutes' repose, heard the words of Mr. Holzschuer, and immediately answered for master Martin—"Do not think of it, my dear sir ; this tun that we are finishing is ordered and bought by the respectable prince, bishop of Bamberg."

"In truth, I cannot sell it to you," added master Martin ; "but, really, from the choice wood and the finish of this work, you ought to have guessed that such a masterpiece could only descend into a prince's cellar. Thus, as my companion Reinhold has said, think no more of this tun. When the vintage is over, I promise to make you a plainer one, which will answer your purpose just as well."

The old man Holzschuer, piqued by the manners of master Martin, immediately retorted, that his silver was as good as the gold of the prince, bishop of Bamberg, and that he could furnish himself elsewhere, and even to better advantage, with as well made tuns as his were.

Master Martin could hardly restrain his anger. Forced to remain silent in the presence of Mr. Holzschuer, who had great influence all over the city, he concealed his spite, and looked about him for an object on which to give it vent, when Conrad, who paid very little attention to the conversation, commenced hammering again with all his force, to drive the hoops down, for the purpose of binding the staves more firmly together. The master cooper, turning towards him, and stamping his foot—"Stupid animal !" exclaimed he ; "are you mad ? Do you not see that you are shattering the finest tun that has ever been made in the Nuremberg workshops ?"

"Ho ! ho !" said Conrad, "my little master is angry ; and why should I not shatter this famous tun, if it pleased me ?" And he commenced striking again more forcibly, until the principal hoop having been broken by a false blow, the whole machine was racked.

“Dog!” howled master Martin, foaming with rage; and snatching from old Valentine’s hands a stave that he was scraping, he struck Conrad a rude blow on the shoulders with it. The journeyman was nearly stunned for a moment, his eyes flashing, as he gritted his teeth. “Struck!” exclaimed he, hoarsely; and, siezing the biggest adz in the workshop, he threw it with all his force at master Martin, whom Frederick had only time to push aside. The edge of the tool, (the stock of which would have split open the old man’s head,) only wounded him in the arm, from which blood flowed. He lost his equilibrium, and fell over an apprentice’s bench.

They all threw themselves before Conrad, whose fury was exasperated by the evil which he had done. His strength, redoubled by anger, put aside all resistance, and, raising the bloody adz, he was about to strike a second blow, when Rosa, who had heard the noise, came running in, pale as death. Conrad was disarmed by her appearance; and, throwing away his murderous weapon, he folded his arms on his breast, and remained for a moment as immoveable as a statue. He then by an inward struggle returned to consciousness, and uttering a cry of grief, he fled.

No one pursued him. The witnesses of this scene raised master Martin, who was covered with blood. It was then discovered that the injury was only a flesh wound. The old man Holzschuer, who had taken refuge behind a pile of boards, then ventured to make his appearance. He commenced a scorching tirade against trades that place in the hands of ignorant people such murderous weapons, and begged Frederick to quit this workshop, and come back to his first trade, the art of moulding and carving metals.

As for master Martin, when he came to himself, and found that he was more frightened than hurt, he had only words to regret the damage caused to the tun for the prince, bishop of Bamberg.

After this event, they had master Martin and Mr. Holzschuer carried back in a sedan chair. Frederick and Reinhold

came back to the city together on foot. On the way, as night was coming on, they heard groans on passing near a hedge, from a voice that they recognized. Suddenly a tall figure arose, which made them start back in surprise. It was Conrad, whom they thus found again, who was in despair for his rash act, and the irreparable results which it had created for the future. "Farewell, my friends," said he to them—"Farewell! we shall never see each other more! Only say to Rosa, that I love her, and conjure her not to curse my remembrance. Say to her, that as long as I live, her bouquet shall never quit the place in which I have put it on my heart. Farewell, farewell, my good comrades!"

He then disappeared across the fields.

Reinhold said to his friend—"This poor Conrad is not an evil-doer; but there is in that young man something strange and mysterious. His actions are not after the ordinary rules of morality. Perhaps we shall know sometime the secret which he has hidden from us."

IX.

Loneliness and sadness reigned after that day in the workshop of master Martin. Reinhold, disgusted with labor, remained whole hours shut up in his chamber. Martin, who carried his wounded arm in a sling, opened his mouth only to curse the wicked stranger. Rosa, dame Martha herself, and her little ones, no longer dared to go to the place that had witnessed this bloody scene; and as is heard sometimes, at the approach of winter, the blows of the solitary woodman, breaking the silence of the forest, so Frederick finished slowly and alone the bishop of Bamberg's tun, and his mallet alone resounded the livelong day.

By degrees discouragement and melancholy took possession of his soul. Rosa no longer appeared at the workshop, since Reinhold, under pretence of illness, remained in his room.

Frederick concluded from this that the young girl loved his friend. He had already well remarked that she reserved for Reinhold her most gracious smiles and her sweetest words. But this time he could no longer doubt her sentiments.

The following Sunday, instead of accepting the invitation of master Martin, who, almost cured of his wound, wished to go with Rosa to walk out of the city, he went away alone, a prey to all the anguish of his thoughts, towards the hill where he had seen Reinhold for the first time. Arrived there, he threw himself on the grass, and reflected on the deceptions of his life, from which each hope was effaced, like a star falling from the sky. He wept over the flowers hidden in the moss, and the flowers bowed their heads under the dew of his tears, as if they had understood his sorrow. Then, without his being able to explain to himself how it was, his sighs, that were carried away by the breeze, gradually became articulated in words; then these words were softly modulated, and he sang his sadness as he would have sung his joy.

Where art thou gone, O Star of Hope ?

Alas, thou art forever gone from me !

Thy brilliant beams no longer ope,

Save to gladden the eyes that called to thee.

Arise, ye stormy nights, arise !

Ye are less terrible than these,

That tear my heart from its surprise,

And cover it with mournful leaves. •

My eyes are drowned in briny tears,

My poor heart sadly moans and bleeds,

Whilst the balmy forest ever hears

The murmurs softly, sweetly plead.

Golden clouds that veil the heavens,

Why do ye glisten with joyous beam ?

Alas, ye cast your shades at even

Upon sad Lethe's joyless stream.

The tomb it is my solitary hope,

Its peaceful slumber I perchance may meet,

When this sad, lonely life with death shall cope,

And the eternal shores my heart shall greet.

Frederick's voice became animated as he sang. His oppressed heart felt some relief, and his tears flowed with less bitterness. The evening breeze rustling among the leaves of the young lindens, the mysterious echoes which inhabit the woods, brought to his ear accents as sweet as animated words; and the horizon, fringed with purple and gold, seemed to invite him towards pleasant paths in the future.

Frederick, a little consoled, arose and descended the flowery hill in the direction of the village. He recalled in thought the evening when he and Reinhold followed the same road; he recalled his promises of eternal friendship. But when he thought over the story that Reinhold had related to him of the two Italian painters, his eyes were opened as if by enchantment. The past became clear to him like a painful certainty. He persuaded himself that Reinhold had formerly loved Rosa; that this love had brought him back to Nuremberg, to master Martin's house; and the narration of the friendly rivalry of the two painters, for the golden laurel, appeared to him an emblem of the love rivalry of which Rosa was to be the prize. All of Reinhold's words came back to his remembrance, and took an entirely different sense from what he had ever attached to them. "Between two friends," exclaimed he, "there can exist neither hate nor envy. It is to thee, then, friend of my heart—to thee, even, that I will go to ask if the time is already come for me to renounce all hope."

This reverie lasted Frederick until he reached the door of Reinhold's apartment. The rising sun lighted with its joyous rays the little chamber. A profound silence reigned there. The young man pushed the door, which was not closed, and entered softly; but hardly had he taken a step, than he remained fixed to the floor, as immovable as a statue. Rosa, in all the brilliancy of her charms, appeared to him admirably painted, the size of life. Near the easel, the painter's maulstick and pallet, all prepared, announced a recent labor.

"O Rosa! Rosa! oh heaven!" sighed Frederick.

At this moment Reinhold touched him on the shoulder, and

said to him, softly, with a happy smile on his face—"What do you think of this picture?"

"Oh! thou art a superior man; thou art a great artist," answered Frederick, embracing Reinhold. "Now all is clear to me; thou hast well deserved the prize that I had the madness to envy thee. And yet, dear friend, I also had a fine artist's project. I had dreamed that it would be nice to cast a silver statuette in the divine likeness of Rosa; but I feel that it was the dream of foolish pride. It is thou alone who art happy; thou alone who hast created the masterpiece. Look, how her smile is animated with heavenly life! and what an angelic glance! Ah! we have both wrestled for the same victory; but to thee, Reinhold—to thee, the triumph and the love! For me, to quit this house, this country! I feel that I can never see Rosa again; it would be beyond my strength. Pardon me, dear friend—pardon me, for this very day I am going to re-commence my sad pilgrimage through the world, and I shall carry nothing away with me except my love and my misery!"

With these words Frederick was about to depart, when Reinhold stopped him. "Thou shalt not leave us," said he, with affectionate entreaty; "for all may turn otherwise than thou thinkest here, and I will no longer hide from thee the secret of my life. Thou hast already seen that I was not born to follow the trade of a cooper, and the sight of this picture may prove to thee that I am not in the last rank among painters. In my tenderest youth, I travelled through Italy to study the masterpieces of the great masters. My talents, developed by a natural inclination, made rapid progress. Soon fortune came to me, as well as glory; and the duke of Florence called me to his court. I was ignorant at that time of all that German art has produced, and I spoke, without knowledge of the cause, of the defects, of the coldness, of the dryness of your Dürer and your Cranach, when one day a picture seller showed me a little canvass of old Albert. It was a portrait of the Virgin, the sublime and the finished

execution of which transported me with enthusiasm. I immediately understood that there was something better than the mannerly grace of the Italian style ; and I soon resolved to visit the studios of the celebrated German painters, to initiate myself into the secrets of their compositions. On arriving at Nuremberg, the first object that struck my sight was Rosa ; and I thought that I saw the beautiful Madonna of Albert Dürer. An immense love burst out in my soul like a conflagration. The rest of the world was effaced from my thoughts, and Art, which until then had so exclusively occupied me, seemed to have no other mission for me than to produce numberless sketches of the features of the divine object of my passion. I sought means to introduce myself into master Martin's house ; but nothing was more difficult. The ordinary tricks employed by lovers became impracticable. I was then about to announce myself openly to Tobias Martin, and ask of him the hand of his daughter, when, by chance, I learned that this worthy man had formally decided that he would accept no other for son-in-law than the most skilful cooper in the country. Far from becoming discouraged at this obstacle, I set off for Strasburg, where I secretly learned this laborious trade, leaving to providence the care of rewarding my efforts. Thou knowest the rest ; and I have only one thing more to reveal to thee, which is, that quite recently master Martin, in a fit of good humor, predicted that I should become, under his auspices, a famous cooper, and that it would please him to see me become, some day, the husband of his pretty daughter, who, as he said, was not too indifferent to me."

" Oh, yes, I feel it well, it is thou that she loves," interrupted Frederick. " I am in her eyes nothing but a miserable workman ; but in thee she has discovered the artist."

" Stop there !" said Reinhold ; " thou art extravagant, and thou forgettest, dear brother, that the little Rosa has not decided. I well know that until now she has shown herself full of kindness and amenity towards me, but this is far from

love. Promise me, dear brother, to remain three days longer here, in perfect quiet. I long since neglected our hogsheads, but it was, as thou seest, since I busied myself about this picture ; all which distracted my attention from it seemed excessively tiresome ; and the longer I go on, the less I feel capable of continuing our trade of stupid workmen. I have decided to throw the adz and mallet to the devil. In three days I will sincerely reveal to thee the feelings of Rosa. If she loves me, thou shalt go, and thou wilt soon see that time cures all sorrows, even those which break the heart."

Frederick promised that he would wait.

In three days from that time, towards night, Frederick, after having finished his work, came slowly back to the city. He thought with uneasiness of the rather severe admonitions he had received from master Martin, for some of his awkwardness. He had also noticed that the master seemed pre-occupied with a secret sadness, and had heard such words escape his lips as "Cowardly intrigue," "Forgotten kindness," &c. Master Martin had not thought proper to explain himself, and Frederick knew not what to think of it, when he met, at the gates of Nuremberg, a man on horseback—it was Reinhold.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, "you have come just in time. I have many things to tell thee." And dismounting, Reinhold passed the bridle around his arm, and pressing his friend's hand, they both walked on. Frederick had noticed from the first that Reinhold had replaced the costume that he wore when they first met. The horse, equipped for the road, carried a portmanteau on his back.

"Be happy, my friend," said Reinhold, in a tone which had suddenly become rude and bitter. "Be happy! and handle at thy ease, henceforth without a rival, the hammer and the plane. I abandon, at this moment, the kingdom of hogsheads. I have just taken leave of the beautiful Rosa and the respectable master Martin."

"How?" exclaimed Frederick, trembling as if a thunder-clap had burst over his head ; "thou art going, when master

Martin accepts thee for son-in-law, and when Rosa loves thee?"

"There again," said Reinhold, "is a phantasmagoria of thy jealous brain. I know, my dear brother, that Rosa would have accepted me for a husband, in obedience to or through fear of her father; but hearts are not taken by force, and her care is not for me. But, really, had it not been for that, I should truly have become a cooper, and like any other, scrape, hoop and guage during six days, and on the seventh display my dignity with the graces of madame Reinhold, in the church of Saint Catherine or Saint Sebald, and then in the evening walk virtuously in the flowery meadows."

"Oh, do not mock," said Frederick, "these simple and peaceful manners. Happiness is hidden in common places."

"Thou art more than right," continued Reinhold, "but let me go on. I found the opportunity to tell Rosa that I loved her, and that her father would consent to our union. At these words I saw the tears start to her eyes, her hand trembled in mine, and she answered me, turning her head aside—'Reinhold, I shall obey the orders of my father.' I took very good care not to press the matter further. A sudden light found its way to my soul, and I very fortunately discovered that my love for the cooper's daughter was nothing but the dream of an enthusiast. It was not Rosa that I loved, but it was an ideal being, of which she had shown me a copy, that I incessantly retraced with all the passion of an artist. I understood that I was in love with a portrait, with a dream, with a fantastic beauty; and I caught a glimpse, with a shudder of disgust, at the poor future that awaited me when I should be installed in the dignity of master workman, with a family. What I loved in the little Rosa, was a heavenly image, which clothed itself in my heart with divine brilliancy, and which my art will cause to live in the creations that I shall spread around me. The destiny of the artist is to go incessantly towards the future, without stopping to pluck flowers by the way. How could I have renounced the tri-

umphs of art, and trampled under foot the crowns that it promises? I salute thee from afar, land of arts and antique genius! O Rome, I shall soon see thee again!"

The two friends arrived thus at a place where the road was forked. Reinhold turned to the left. "Farewell!" said he to Frederick, embracing him—"Farewell, my friend; let us separate; who knows if we shall ever meet again!"

He then sprang to his saddle, and spurred on without looking behind him.

Frederick remained long in the place, his eyes fixed on the lonesome road. He then returned to the house, his heart oppressed with grief. Dark forebodings agitated his soul. He fancied that separation resembles death!

X.

At some time from that, master Martin, sad and thoughtful, finished the bishop of Bamberg's tun. Frederick, who was working by his side, said not a word! The departure of Reinhold had deprived him of all joy. Finally, master Martin, throwing his mallet down, folded his arms angrily, and muttered between his teeth!—"There is Reinhold gone after Conrad. He was such a painter as is seldom seen, but he thought to make me a dupe! How could one imagine such rascality under such distinguished traits, with manners so frank, so civil! At last, he is unmasked; and Frederick at least, will remain faithful to me, for he is a clever and simple workman. And who knows what might happen? If thou shouldst become, my dear boy, a skilful master, and should please my little Rosa.—I shall see, I shall see."—And saying this, master Martin picked up his mallet, and returned to his labor. Frederick whilst listening to him had felt a warm emotion thrill through his whole being; but at the same time an indefinable discouragement deprived him of hope. Rosa appeared in the workshop, where she had not put her foot

for many days ; but her face bore the impress of an ill-disguised sadness ; it could be seen that she had been weeping. "The departure of Reinhold is the cause of these tears ; she loves him then !" said Frederick to himself. This thought nearly broke his heart, and he dared not raise his eyes towards her.

Meanwhile the great tun was finished. Master Martin, before his work, felt his former gaiety return. "Yes, my boy," said he to Frederick, striking him familiarly on the shoulder, "if thou canst succeed in doing a piece of work like this, and if thou pleasest Rosa, thou shalt be my son-in-law ; this will not prevent you from cultivating the art of singing, and thus you will gain two excellent reputations."

As work came from every quarter to his work-shop, master Martin was obliged to engage two new journeymen, very skilful men at their trade, but free livers, drinkers and roysterers. The work-shop soon resounded with jokes or such gross songs that Rosa was forced to abstain from going there, and Frederick was completely isolated.

When at times Frederick met his beloved, he sighed and fixed a glance upon her that seemed to say :

"My cherished Rosa, you are no longer good and charming to me, as at the time when Reinhold was here !" To which the young girl, lowering her eyes, answered by her modest embarrassment : "Master Frederick, have you any thing to say to me ?" But in these very rare instances, the poor young man remained speechless, and as if petrified : and Rosa disappeared like the soft flashes of lightning during the warm summer evenings, which the eye admires without being able to seize upon them.

Master Martin did not cease to insist that Frederick should set himself about preparing his master-workman's master-piece. He had himself selected a sufficient quantity of oak boards without veins or knots, and which had already undergone five good years' seasoning, sheltered both from dampness and dryness. No one was to assist Frederick, except the old man

Valentine. The poor boy, already disgusted with the trade by his forced intimacy with his new workshop companions, had no longer spirit to work ; he felt a want of confidence before an enterprise whose want of success would cause all his dreams of happiness to vanish. A vague instinct, that he could not define, repeated to him unceasingly that he would fail under the weight of his task, and he became suddenly ashamed at having condemned himself to a manual labor which was so repugnant to his vocation of artist. The disgrace of Reinhold was always present to his memory. From time to time, to withdraw himself from the painful besetting of his fears, he feigned indisposition to force himself from the duty of going to the work-shop, and he hurried away to pass whole hours at Saint Sebald's church, examining the Peter Fischer's master-piece of carving, and exclaiming with inspired exaltation :—" Oh, Heavenly Father ! to imagine such things and have the power in one's self to execute them, is it not the greatest happiness on earth ? " and when, on recovering from these ecstasies, the reality of the staves and hoops of master Martin's workshop stared him in the face, when he thought that Rosa would be the price of a miserable tun fabricated with more or less art, he felt despair consuming his strength, and his brain wandering. At night, Reinhold appeared in his dreams, and spread out before him inimitable models whose realization would have immortalized the founder. And, in these marvellous designs, the figure of Rosa was always the principal subject, framed in the most capricious mixture of foliage and flowers. All this seemed to become animated, grow green and flourish ; the metal, like a brilliant mirror, reflected the image of the adored young girl ; Frederick extended his arms towards her, calling her by the sweetest names ; but when he thought to reach her, the fantastic picture evaporated like a fugitive haze. On awaking, the poor artist detested a little more his sad future as cooper. An idea came into his head that he would go and confide his grief to his old master Johannes Holzschuer. Charmed to

see his favorite scholar again, he allowed Frederick to come to his house and carve a little work, for the execution of which he had gradually and for a long time gathered the necessary gold and silver. Frederick took hold of this work with such ardor that he almost entirely neglected his labor in the work-shop of master Martin, and many months elapsed without his master-work being talked of, which was to rival the Bamberg tun. But, one fine day, master Martin pressed him so earnestly, that it was necessary, willing, or unwilling, to take up again the adz and mallet. When the work was commenced, the master came to examine the progress; but at the sight of the boards already spread out, he became violently angry and exclaimed—"What is all that? What paltry work art thou making, my poor Frederick? A three days' apprentice would not cut up wood in that manner! Frederick, what demon has guided thy hand to spoil the best oak-wood that I have seen for a long time? Is that thy masterpiece?"

Frederick could no longer hold out against the unmeasured reproaches of master Martin, and throwing his tools to the other end of the workshop:—"Well! master," exclaimed he, "I am done! no, should it cost me my life, should I fall into the depths of misery, no, I will work no more! I renounce this trade which I hate, and for which I was not formed. For I too am an artist! I too love your daughter passionately, deliriously; it was my love that tempted me to this odious trial. I now see that all happiness, all hope is lost for me! I shall die, but I will die an artist, and I will leave behind me some token of remembrance! And now I return to my first and worthy master, Johannes Holzschuer, whom I had abandoned!"

Master Martin's eyes flashed fire when he heard Frederick reply so spiritedly. "And thou also?" exclaimed he; "thou also hast deceived me! So the cooper's trade is odious to thee! So much the better, so much the better, good for nothing! out from here! out from here." And without giving Frederick time to recover himself, he took him by the shoulders

and pushed him out, to the great glorification of the journeymen and apprentices, who had witnessed this scene. The old man Valentine, his hands clasped and his brow clouded, said in a low voice : — “ I thought that there was something better in that journeyman than in a common workman.” Dame Martha, who liked Frederick, and her little ones whom he often regaled with delicacies, were inconsolable at his departure.

XI.

Master Martin’s workshop became sadder than ever. The new journeymen gave him nothing but care. Forced to watch over the least details, he passed his days in burdensome fatigue, and at night, tormented by wakefulness, he repeated incessantly : “ Ah ! Reinhold, ah ! Frederick, why did you thus deceive me ? Why were you not simply honest and laborious workmen ? ” The poor man visibly failed, and was many times on the point of giving up his calling, and dying of langour. He was seated one evening before the door of his house, pre-occupied with painful reveries, when he saw coming towards him Jacobus Paumgartner, accompanied by master Johannes Holzschuer ; he thought truly that they were going to speak to him about Frederick. In effect, Paumgartner turned the conversation towards this subject, and Holzschuer exerted himself in eulogizing the young artist ; and both rivalled each other in praising the excellent qualities of Frederick, and in predicting the future that was reserved for his talents, supplicated master Martin to give up his prejudices in his favor, and not to renounce the idea of granting the hand of his daughter to this young man, who after all would make her happy, and would do credit some day to his father-in-law. Master Martin allowed them to have their say : then taking off his fur cap slowly, he very calmly answered them : — “ My dear gentlemen, you take so pressing an interest in what relates to this youth, that I would fain pardon him some-

thing at your solicitation. But, for the rest, I will not relinquish my resolution ; and, as to the marriage above all, there will never be any more relations between him and my daughter."

As he was saying this, dwelling on each syllable, Rosa came into the room, pale and trembling, and placed upon the table a flagon of the famous Hochheim wine and three glasses,—"It must be, then," said Holzschuer, "that I allow poor Frederick to depart, who has resolved, in his grief, to expatriate himself? And yet, look, dear master, look at this work in carving that he has executed at my house, under my supervision, and say, if you can, that there was not in this young man material for a great artist. It is a farewell remembrance that he asks you to allow your daughter to accept. Only look at this pretty work!" And master Holzschuer drew from his pocket a silver goblet, delicately wrought ; and master Martin who prided himself upon his good taste, examined it very carefully. It was, indeed, a little masterpiece. Around it ran a wreath of vines and roses, and from each blown rose peeped the figure of a little angel, carved with perfect grace. The bottom on the inside, lined with gold, was ornamented with similar little figures ; and when you poured into the goblet a flood of golden wine, these little smiling angels seemed to move as if to rise to the surface.—"I confess that this is an excellent piece of workmanship," said master Martin, "and I will keep this cup if Frederick will accept twice the value of it in good new ducats."

Saying this, master Martin filled the goblet and emptied it at a draught. At this moment the door was softly opened, and Frederick, disfigured by grief and the tears that he had shed, appeared and remained immovable at the entrance of the room, in the attitude of a criminal who is about to hear his condemnation. Rosa, who perceived him first, uttered an exclamation, and fell lifeless into his arms.

Master Martin dropped the goblet, and looking at Frederick fixedly, as if he had seen a spectre, he arose, and said with emotion—"Rosa, Rosa, dost thou then love this Frederick?"

“More than my life!” said the poor girl in a broken voice.

“Well, then, my boy, I pardon thee; embrace thy betrothed; yes, yes, thy betrothed.”

Paumgartner and the old man Holzschuer looked at each other in astonishment, and master Martin continued aloud, but speaking to himself:

“Good Heaven! it is thus, then, that this prophecy of the grandmother is to be accomplished! Is this not, in effect, the pretty house, the little angels with enamelled wings? Besides, the goblet is nothing but an infinitely little tun, and truly everything is for the best, for I can thus consent without changing my mind; I ought to have thought of that sooner.”

Frederick, overcome with joy, had hardly strength to press the pretty Rosa more closely to his heart.—“Oh, my dear master,” exclaimed he, when he had recovered himself a little, “what! can it be true that you consent to accept me as son-in-law, and allow me to practise my art?”

“Yes, yes,” replied master Martin: “thou has fulfilled the prediction of the old grandmother, thy trial-work no longer remains to be done.”

“No, dear master,” replied Frederick, “do not let me give it up yet; I will, on the contrary, finish my mammoth tun; I will leave it to you as a mark of my respect for the profession you have rendered illustrious, and I will afterwards return to my crucibles.”

“Honor to thee for that good thought,” said master Martin, rising with enthusiasm; “finish, then, thy masterpiece. The day thou shalt give the last blow of the mallet, shall be thy wedding day.”

Frederick went to work with great zeal, and the immense tun that grew up under his hands was the admiration of all the leading coopers. Master Martin was at the height of joy. The wedding day was fixed, and the trial-work, filled with generous wine and ornamented with flowery garlands, was placed at the entrance of the house. The master coopers with their families, conducted by the worthy counsellor Jacobus

Paumgartner, and the master of jewellers, united in a brilliant procession to go to the church of Saint Sebald. At the moment of setting out, the noise of horses and the sound of music was heard before master Martin's house : and he, running to the balcony, recognized lord Heinrich Spangenberg, having by his side a young and brilliant cavalier, wearing a sword and hat ornamented with floating plumes and precious stones. Near the young man rode a marvellously beautiful lady, and behind these three personages pranced a numerous retinue of servants in costumes of all colors.

The music having stopped, the old man Spangenberg cried out to master Martin, raising his head : — “ Ho, ho, master Martin, it is neither for your cellar nor your ducats that I come here ; I come on account of the marriage of your pretty daughter. Will you receive me, dear master ? ”

Master Martin, a little confused by the recollection of these words, went down as fast as his legs would allow him, to receive with all kinds of salutations, his old and noble customer. The beautiful lady and the cavalier also dismounted and entered the house. But hardly had the worthy cooper looked at the young cavalier than he started back in surprise.— “ Good heaven ! ” exclaimed he, clasping his hands, “ this is Conrad,”

“ Truly, yes,” said the young man, smilingly ; “ I am your former journeyman. Pardon me, dear master, a certain wound which I have kept in remembrance. I could very well have killed you that day, for you had treated me very rudely ! But all is for the best, let us think no more of it.”

Master Martin assured him that he was very thankful that the cursed adz had only slightly cut him ; he then begged his guests to enter the principal room, where the bride and bridegroom and the friends of the family had united to witness the ceremony. The appearance of the beautiful lady was saluted by a very flattering murmur ; everybody remarked that her beauty resembled in a surprising degree the ravishing features of the young bride ; they might have been taken for twin sisters,

Conrad gallantly approached towards the cooper's daughter, and said to her with exquisite grace :—" Permit, my beautiful young lady, Conrad to partake of your felicity to-day ; deign to tell him that you forget his former outbursts, and that you pardon him as your father has done."

And as Rosa stood disconcerted, and master Martin and the guests were looking on in astonishment, the elder Mr. Spangenberg spoke to end this embarrassment.

" You think that you are dreaming ! " said he. " But this is my son Conrad, and there is his ravishing affianced wife whose name is Rosa, like master Martin's pretty daughter. Remember then, dear master, the other day that, talking with you over a flagon of your old wine, I asked if you would refuse your daughter to everybody, even to my son. I had good reasons, for speaking thus. My rash son was in love with her, to such a point that it was necessary, in order not to drive him to despair, that I should take upon myself the management of this affair. When I related to him, to cure him, the reception which you had given me, and your strange caprice in the matter of son-in-law, Conrad could think of nothing better than slipping into your house as workman, in order to be near Rosa, and with the design of stealing her away from you some day. Luckily for you, the blow of the stave on his shoulders broke the wings of his love. I congratulated myself on it, and my son, to remain faithful in some degree to his first inclination, fell in love with a noble heiress, who bears like your daughter the name of Rosa, and who very nearly resembles her."

The young lady then approached Rosa, threw around her neck a fine pearl necklace of great value, and taking from her bosom a bunch of faded flowers,—“ Here,” said she to her, “ here is the bouquet which you gave to Conrad, and which he has carefully kept. Are you not angry that he has given it to me ? It was, he told me, what he held most precious ! ” A bright color mounted to the pale cheeks of the cooper's daughter.

"Ah, noble lady," said she in a low voice, "it was you alone that this young lord ought to have loved. He knew you, I am sure, before thinking of me. The resemblance in the names and the likeness of features has procured for a short time his attention. It was the recollection of you that he sought for in me. But I am not angry with him for it."

As the procession got ready for the second time to leave the house of master Martin, a fine young man, who wore with rare elegance a rich Italian costume, came forward and embraced Frederick. "Reinhold! my friend Reinhold!" exclaimed the bridegroom: and the two friends embraced each other closely. Master Martin and Rosa partook of their joy.

"Did I not tell thee truly," said the artist, "that happiness would come at the sound of the mallet? I arrive in time to share thy joy, and I bring thee my bridal gift."

Two servants then entered, and discovered, to the astonished gaze of the guests, a magnificent canvass, on which were painted master Martin, with Reinhold, Frederick and Conrad, working on the prince bishop of Bamberg's tun, at the moment that Rosa appeared among them.

"That is," said Frederick smilingly, "thy masterwork; mine is down below, full of wine; but patience, I shall have to make another."

"I knew all," continued Reinhold, "and I find thee more fortunate than myself. Be faithful to thy art, which, better than mine, can agree with a calm life and the sedentary habits of a good home. Happiness, friend, is only found in common places."

At the nuptial feast, Frederick seated himself between the two Rosas, and opposite to him master Martin placed himself between Conrad and Reinhold. At the dessert, the counselor Jacobus Paumgartner filled the silver goblet, carved by Frederick, and drank the first draught in honor of master Martin and his joyous companions. Then the goblet made the circuit of the guests, who celebrated until the morrow, the good cellar of the master of the candles.

Abenteuer der Jugendzeit
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Stücke in Callot's manner, II
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THE LOST REFLECTION.

Abenteuer der
Reflexion

I.

I was feverish, even to delirium; the coldness of death pierced my heart, and in spite of the fury of the storm, I ran into the streets, bare-headed, without cloak, like one escaped from a mad-house. The weather-cocks creaked on the roofs like frightened owls, and the gusts of night wind succeeded each other in space like the deaf sound of the eternal wheel-work which marks the fall of years into the Gulf of Time. It was, nevertheless, the night before the joyous holiday of Christmas. Now every year the devil chooses precisely this epoch to play me some trick in his own fashion. This is one among a thousand. The counsellor of the peace of our town is in the habit of giving to Saint Silvestre a brilliant evening party, to celebrate the approach of the new year. As soon as I had entered the anteroom, the counsellor perceiving, ran to meet me, and stopped me. "Dear friend, you cannot imagine what a delicious surprise awaits here you this evening!" At the same time he took me by the hand and drew me into the parlor, among ladies of the most exquisite elegance, seated on sofas arranged in a circle around the fire-place, where a clear fire was sparkling. I perceived *her* adored features! It was *she*, she that I had not seen for several years. By what miracle was she given back to me? I remained at the sight of her motionless and dumb.

"Well," said the counsellor, pushing me a little,—*"well then!"*

I advanced mechanically. "Good God!" exclaimed I, "is it really you, Julia? you here?"

At these words she rose and said to me coldly—"I am glad to see you here; your health appears to be extremely good."

Then taking her place again, she leaned towards her neighbor, without taking any more notice of me, and said to her mincingly—"Dear Bella, shall we have a fine spectacle next week?"

I was floored. The fear of ridicule finished the piteous figure that I made there. Saluting the ladies, to get off as soon as possible, I backed on to the counsellor, who was taking his cup of tea, the shock spilt the burning contents over his laced ruffle and plaited wristbands. They laughed loudly at my awkwardness; nevertheless I gained confidence to wrestle with fatality, for Julia alone had not smiled. Her look attached itself to me with an expression which gave me back a glimpse of hope. A few moments after she rose to go into the next room, where an improvisatore was amusing the company. The white dress of Julia brought out admirably the charms of her waist, the brilliancy of her snowy shoulders, and the elegance of contour in her whole person. There was in her extreme seductions; she resembled, by the purity of her bearing, a virgin of Mieris. Before going into the neighboring saloon, she turned towards me; it seemed to me then that this face, of such perfect and angelic beauty, was wrinkled with a slight expression of irony. I was seized with an indescribable uneasiness. Meanwhile, a few minutes after, I found Julia quite near me.

"I should like," said she to me in a whisper, and in the smoothest manner—"I should like to have you take your place at the pianoforte, to play one of those tender airs that I formerly loved so much."

As I went about answering her with all the enthusiasm which my former remembrances gave back to me, several persons passed between us, and we were separated. I tried for

some time all means for renewing our tête-à-tête, without being able to succeed. It might have been said that Julia sought, on her side, all possible excuses to avoid me. A short time after, there was no one between us but the servant who carried the refreshments. Julia took a finely cut-glass full of delicious sherbet. She presented it to me, saying—

“Friend, do you accept it from my hand with as much happiness as you would formerly have felt?”

“Oh, Julia! Julia!” exclaimed I, touching her alabaster fingers, whose contact sent through my veins an electric shock. “Oh, Julia!” I could not say another word; a veil slid over my sight, everything turned around me, I lost the sense of hearing; and when I came to my senses, I found myself, with surprise, reclining on a sofa, in a perfumed boudoir, Julia leaning over me, regarding me with love as formerly.

“Oh!” said I to her, trying to draw her towards me, “I have found thee again; is it not so forever, oh my beautiful angel of love and poetry? Thy life is mine, and nothing can separate us more!”

At this moment a hideous face, mounted on long spider’s legs, with frog’s eyes that stuck out of his forehead, suddenly opened the door of the boudoir, crying in a squeaking voice, “Where the devil did my wife go to?”

Julia, frightened, escaped from my side.

“Julia married! Julia forever lost for me?” I threw myself like a madman out of this accursed house; and this is why I ran breathlessly, bare-headed, without cloak, through the fury of the storm. The weather-cocks creaked on the roofs like frightened owls, and the gusts of night wind that whipped in the space whirlwinds of snow, seemed the voices of demons who laughed at my madness and my despair.

II.

Rushing along from street to street like a wild horse, I arrived in front of the Hunter's Tavern. A group of joyous companions came out of it, with gay songs and noisy bursts of laughter. Devoured by a burning thirst, I went into the inn, and let myself drop, all out of breath, into a seat.

"What shall I serve you with, sir?" said the landlord, taking off his foxskin cap.

"A mug of beer and some tobacco," I cried.

Thanks to the cherished liquid of our good Germans, I found myself soon in a state of inert satisfaction, so profound that the devil, who had bewitched me all that evening, judged that he would be doing wisely to put off until the morrow the next trick that he was preparing for me. My ball dress, joined to my singular physiognomy, must have produced an incredible effect on my pot-house neighbors. I imagined that the landlord was about to question me, when a vigorous hand knocked on the shutters of the inn, whilst a voice cried out—"Open, open, it is I!"

Hardly was the door partly opened, (for it was then an unseasonable hour,) when a tall person, who appeared to be nothing but skin and bones, slid into the room, trying to walk with his back against the wall. He came and seated himself in front of me. The landlord put two lights on the table. This new comer had a distinguished but melancholy face. He asked, as I had done, for a pot of beer and a pipe of tobacco; then he appeared to busy himself in his reflections, at the same time blowing out enormous clouds of smoke, which, mixed with mine, enveloped us in a few instants in an atmosphere of narcotic fog. I contemplated him, without saying a word, through this cloud. His black hair, parted on the forehead, fell back in curls, after the style of the heads of Rubens. He wore a straight frock coat, ornamented with frogs, and what surprised me not a little, he had put on over his boots large furred slippers.

When he had finished smoking his pipe, he took from a tin case a large quantity of plants, which he spread out upon the table, and set himself to examine them one after another with eminent satisfaction. For the purpose of entering into conversation with him, I complimented him on the knowledge that he appeared to possess of botany. He smiled in a strange manner, and answered—"Those plants that you see have no real value except their rarity. I gathered them myself on the sides of the summit of Chimborazo.

As I was about asking him a new question, some one knocked again at the door of the inn. The landlord went to open it, and a voice cried from without—"Do me the kindness to cover your mirror."

"Ah!" said the host, Gen. Suvarow arrives very late this evening."

At the same time a little dried-up man, rolled up in the folds of a brown cloak, entered skippingly into the tavern, and came and seated himself between the traveller from Chimborazo and myself.

"How cold it is out," said he; "and what a smoke there is here! I should like to have a pinch of snuff."

I hastened to offer him my steel snuff-box, polished like a mirror—a pledge of friendship very dear to me. Hardly had the little man thrown his eyes upon it, than he started back, and cried out, whilst pushing it with both hands—"To the devil with your accursed mirror!"

I looked at him in a stupor. All his features were convulsed, and he was pale as death. I did not dare to ask him the cause of the uneasiness that he felt. I do not know what of fantastic and infernal seemed to me to be attached to this little man in brown. I approached my friend from Chimborazo, and we continued our conversation on botany. Whilst conversing, I looked from time to time at the little man with anxiety, and seeing his face change every minute, an icy shuddering ran through my veins. From phrase to phrase,

and undoubtedly on account of our so singular a meeting, the conversation fell upon the metaphysics of happiness.

"By my faith," said the man from Chimborazo, "all my philosophy resolves itself into opposing patience to the thousand and one annoyances with which life is strown. We leave every day, and every where, a rag of our poor existence attached to some misfortune from which all human prudence would not have been able to preserve us."

"Faith, my dear, master," returned I, "I am an incontestible example of the truth of what you say; for this very night I have lost, by a very disagreeable accident, my hat and cloak, which remain hung up in the anteroom of the counsellor of justice."

At these words I saw my two neighbors start as if they had received a violent blow. The little man in brown threw towards me a savage look, in which there was something eminently diabolical. He jumped up into a chair, and re-adjusted carefully the red serge curtain with which the host had covered the mirror, whilst the citizen from Chimborazo snuffed the candles so as not to have the slightest shadow formed.

The conversation was with difficulty renewed, and fell upon the work of a young painter, then very much in vogue.

"His talent," said the tall man, "seizes the resemblance with admirable art. Nothing is wanting in his portraits but speech; to such a point that they would be taken, they are so animated, for a reflection stolen from a mirror."

"What stupidity!" said the little man in brown, moving about uneasily in his chair; "how can we suppose that the image reflected in a mirror can be stolen?—by whom, I ask you, unless the devil meddles with it? Yes, yes, Monsieur the wise man, Monsieur the great judge in matters of art, show me how, I pray you, to touch with my finger a reflection taken from the first mirror we find, and I will make a pirouette a hundred feet high!"

The tall thin man arose, and approaching the little man in brown, said—"Softly, my friend; do not be so sharp, or you

will be made to jump the simple height of the stair-case which leads into the street. Zounds! I advise you to be proud. Your face must produce a pleasant effect in a looking-glass."

He had hardly finished this speech, when the little man rolled over on his seat, convulsed with laughter, crying out as loudly as he could—"Ha! ha! ha! my poor comrade, of what importance is my reflection? I have at least a shadow that has never been stolen from me."

And saying this, he went dancing out of the tavern. The tall thin citizen fell back into his seat like a man annihilated.

"What is the matter with you, my dear sir?" said I to him, with a tone full of compassion.

"What is the matter with me!" answered he with sobs—"what is the matter with me! Alas, that little man that you saw here just now is a wicked sorcerer, who comes to claim me in the last asylum where I had thought to find a refuge against the frightful misfortune of having lost my——. Farewell, sir, farewell!"

And the stranger rising, walked rapidly towards the door, not throwing the least shadow on the walls.

"Peter Schlemihl! Peter Schlemihl!" exclaimed I, running after him; for by this I recognized this celebrated man accursed. But he had already got too far in advance of me, and disappeared in the darkness. When I turned to go back to my place, the host pushed me out by the shoulders, and shut the door in my face, saying—"May God preserve my house from such ghosts! I would as soon serve the devil in person!"

III.

Mr. Mathieu is my intimate friend, and his porter the most stylish Cerebus that I know. The latter opened to me at the first sound of the bell that I rang at the door of the Golden Eagle. I related to him in a few words the little miseries of my evening; and as the key of my room remained in my

cloak at the house of the counsellor, he opened another room for me, placed a light in it, and discreetly retired, after having wished me good night. There was in this chamber a large mirror covered with a curtain. I placed the light in front of the glass, from which I drew aside the veil to contemplate the sorrowful figure that I thought I must make. But hardly had I fixed my eyes upon my own image, when it seemed to me that I saw a vague and floating figure come out from the distant perspective formed by the mirror, and advance towards me. Little by little this form became distinct, and I soon recognized the adored features of Julia. I could not restrain a cry of surprise and love. I held out my arms towards this apparition, calling out—"Julia! Julia!"

At this moment I heard behind me a prolonged sigh. I ran to the other end of the room, and drew aside quickly the curtain of the bed, when I perceived, plunged in a profound slumber, the little man in brown. From his breast, agitated by a heavy nightmare, escaped at intervals the name of a woman.

"Giulietta! Giulietta!" murmured he.

I felt a shudder; but taking courage, I rudely shook the little man, crying out to him—"Hallo, my friend, who the devil put you into my bed? Try, if you please, to seek for lodgings elsewhere."

The little man stretched himself, awoke slowly, and said to me—"Ah, thank you, sir? you have awakened me out of an unpleasant dream."

He appeared, whilst saying this, so depressed, that I took pity on him. I understood, besides, that the porter might have opened, by mistake, this chamber, rightly occupied, and that I should do wrong in disturbing the repose of its tenant.

"Sir," said the little man, leaning his elbow on the pillow, "my conduct at the inn must have appeared very absurd to you; but what can I do? I am under a cruel influence, which very often exposes me to commit a great deal of rudeness."

“Very well, my dear, sir,” replied I, “I am precisely in the same predicament; and this evening when I saw Julia—”

“Julia? did you say?” exclaimed the little man, his face becoming convulsed.

“Ah, sir, I supplicate you, let me sleep; and have the kindness to put down the curtain over the glass.”

Saying these words, the little man in brown hid his face in the folds of the pillow.

“But, my dear unknown,” replied I, raising my voice to force him to hear me, “why does this woman’s name, which I have just pronounced, cause you so painful a sensation? I hope that you will confide this to me, when, after covering the glass again, according to your desire, I shall take my place in bed at your side; for, seriously, it is time to rest.”

The little man rose up on end, as if a spring had acted upon him—“You will then know the secret of my miserable life. Well, then, this is my story.”

At the same time he got out of bed, rolled himself up in a kind of dressing-gown, and came towards the fire-place; but the curtain over the glass was not yet put back, and he fixed his eyes upon it. Oh, surprising! whilst standing erect beside him, I could not see his reflection by the side of mine!

The little man turned upon me a look filled with painful emotion. “Sir,” said he, “I am more to be pitied than Peter Schlemihl. Schlemihl sold his shadow; that was his own fault; and besides, he received the price of it. I, sir, have given her my reflection for love—to *her*, to Giulietta; alas! alas!”

He ran and threw himself into bed, and tried to stifle his moanings.

All kinds of sensations agitated my soul at the sight of a scene so sorrowfully grotesque. I remained chained to the place where I stood, like a real automaton, when I heard my friend in bed snore like the barrel of an organ. The temptation to imitate him took such a strong hold of me, that ten

minutes after I was sleeping like one of the blessed, on the half of the bed that he gave up to me.

An hour before day I was awakened by the shining of a brilliant light. On opening my eyes, I perceived the little man, half dressed, very busily employed writing by the light of two candles. His grotesque appearance gave me the vertigo. I fell into a kind of hallucination, which transported me to the house of the counsellor, seated on a sofa, as the night before, near Julia. The counsellor appeared to me to be a sugar doll in the midst of bushes loaded with fruit, and tufted with roses. Julia offered me, as before, a glass, from which sparkled, like phosphorus, little blue flames. Then some one pulled me from behind ; it was this very little man in brown, who whispered into my ear—" Do not drink ! do not drink ! "

" What are you afraid of ? " said Julia ; " are you not wholly mine, you and your reflection ? "

I took the glass from her hand, and was about drinking, when the little man in brown, metamorphosed into a squirrel, jumped upon my shoulder, and repeated to me—" Do not drink ! do not drink ! " and with his floating tail he tried to extinguish the little blue flames.

Julia spoke again—" Why," said she to me, " dost thou refuse to take this glass, oh my beloved ? This little flame, pure and brilliant, that thou seest burning on its surface, is the emblem of the first kiss of our ancient love. "

At the sound of this voice so sweet, I felt moved and transported. I was about pressing to my heart this idolized woman, when Peter Schlemihl passed between us, and began to laugh in our faces. At the same time all the persons who filled the room of the counsellor, appeared to me to be changed into little sugar figures, and all commenced jumping about and buzzing like bees, and climbing around me like a parcel of children.

I awoke ; it was broad day ; noon sounded from the belfry of the neighboring church ; and I asked myself, whilst rub-

bing my eyes, if the history of my nocturnal apparitions was not a nightmare, when the servant of the hotel coming in with my chocolate, informed me that the stranger who had shared my room and bed went away at daybreak, begging him to give me his compliments. Here is what this singular person had written and left, unintentionally perhaps, on the table.

IV.

It happened one day that Erasmus Spicker found himself at the height of joy ; for the first time in his life he was allowed to travel. He filled with gold pieces a leather belt, and mounted into a travelling carriage to visit poetic Italy. His dear wife took a weeping farewell of him, and held little 'Rasmus up to the carriage window twenty times for his father to give him a kiss at parting. Then she charged her dear husband, above all things, not to lose the travelling cap that she herself had knit for him of fine wool.

Erasmus arrived at Florence, where he found several of his countrymen giving themselves up, without reserve, to all the pleasures of life. He set himself bravely to partake of their orgies, and was with them in all their adventures. Now it happened that all the joyous companions had one night appointed a meeting at a country seat in the suburbs, to have a full feast. All of them, except Erasmus, had taken their mistresses. The men wore their national costume of old Germany ; the women were dressed in the holiday dresses of their country. They ate, they drank, they sang the most delicious romances of Italy. The orange trees in bloom shed their perfume on the air ; the evening breeze carried through the distant space bursts of voluptuous harmony ; the joy of the guests rose even to the limits of delirium.

Suddenly Frederick, the freest liver of the troupe, rose. With one arm he supported the waist of his mistress, and with the other he raised above his head his glass filled to the brim with golden wine.

“ Oh, my friends,” exclaimed he, “ in what place in the world could be found, better than here, all that makes life worth living? Women of Italy, if love did not exist since the beginning of the world, you would have invented it! But thou, Erasmus, why then didst thou come here alone? Why alone dost thou not partake of our joy? Why dost thou sadden us by the melancholy of thy face?”

“ What shall I say to you, oh my friends,” answered Erasmus; “ my heart does not partake of your joy, because my mind does not place its joy in the pleasures of the senses. Besides, I have left in our country a faithful wife, whose confidence I must not deceive. You are free, but I have a family that I must think of unceasingly.”

The young people laughed at the virtue of Erasmus, whose youthful physiognomy seemed as yet so little fitted for the cares of a household. Frederick's mistress had the discourse of Spicker translated into Italian for her, then she said, smilingly — “ Here is a wise man, whom Giulietta could make lose his soul.”

As she said this, a woman of marvellous beauty entered the room. You would have thought, to have seen her, that she was one of Rubens' or Mieris' virgins.

“ Giulietta!” exclaimed the young girls.

Giulietta threw a malicious look around among the guests. “ Brave Germans,” said she to them, “ will you give me a place at your joyous banquet? Hold! there is just one of you who appears to be alone and sad; I will go and try to smooth his wrinkles.”

Taking a place with ravishing coquetry near Erasmus, she made, by her caresses, all the young men jealous of the good fortune of Spicker.

Erasmus had felt, at the sight of Giulietta, a devouring fire circulate in his veins. When he felt her near him, the pleasure of desire exalted his imagination. The beautiful Italian rose, took a goblet and offered it to him. Hardly had he swallowed a draught of the perfidious beverage, when he fell on his

knees before the syren :—" Oh ! " exclaimed he, " it is thou, thou alone in the world who art worthy of love, angel from heaven !—it is thou that I have sought for in my youthful dreams ! I have found thee at last,—thou art my soul, my life, and my god ! "

The young men looked at each other ; some of them thought that Erasmus had become mad ; they had never seen him thus before.

The whole night was passed amid songs of pleasure and vows of love. When morning broke each one went his way with his lady. Erasmus wanted to accompany Giulietta, but she denied his pressing entreaty, and contented herself with pointing out to him a house in which he might see her again.

Poor Spicker was obliged to regain his solitary home, escorted by a little servant armed with a torch. When he arrived in his street, the servant extinguished the torch on the flagging stones, for day already succeeded morning.

Suddenly a tall thin man, with a hooked nose and satanic look, dressed in a scarlet jacket with steel buttons, appeared before Erasmus, and said to him smilingly, and in a trembling voice—" Hallo, master Spicker ! have we just escaped from some old book of plates, with this costume of past times, this cap of feathers, and this rapier ? Do you want the children to cry after you in the streets ? You had better go quickly back into your old book. "

" What is my costume to you ? " cried Erasmus. Pushing against the coxcomb, who stopped him, he tried to pass on ; but the man in red stopping him, said very loudly—" Softly, my friend ; do not move so quickly, and do not push people ; it is not time to go to the house of the beautiful Giulietta. "

The color came into the face of Erasmus ; he tried to seize the red man by the collar to strangle him, but he made a spring from him and disappeared like a flash of lightning.

" Sir," said the valet, " do not mind this adventure ; you have just met the marvellous doctor of Florence, Sig. Daper-tutto. "

The same day, Erasmus went to the place pointed out to him by Giulietta. The beautiful Italian welcomed him with coquetry still more refined than the night before. She took pleasure in observing the progress of the passion that Erasmus had conceived for her ; but she kept him at a respectful distance, and opposed to all his efforts an immovable coldness. This resistance only inflamed the more his foolish love. He stopped visiting his friends to consecrate his time to following the steps of Giulietta.

One day Frederick met him, took him by the arm and said to him—"Knowest thou, poor Spicker, that thou hast fallen into a very dangerous snare ? How, hast thou not already learnt that Giulietta is a woman of gallantry, and above all the most tricky of those who have ever plucked a lover ? They tell of her the most scurvy stories. Is it for such a creature as this that thou canst give up thy friends, and forget thy wife and child ?"

At these words Erasmus understood his fault ; he covered his face with his hands, and wept bitterly.

"Come, Spicker," said Frederick, "let us quit Florence, this dangerous city ; let us go back into our good country."

"Yes," said Erasmus, "let us start this very day."

But as Frederick was going off with his friend, behold the Signor Dapertutto passed near Erasmus, and laughing in his face, cried out—"Good luck, my young friend ; run, Giulietta is dying of impatience and love, and accusing you of negligence."—Erasmus stopped short, in surprise.

"Good God !" said Frederick ; "this Dr. Dapertutto is a quack, really worthy of correction. There never was a more insolent monkey, since he poisons with his fashionable pills the famous Giulietta."

"Giulietta !" exclaimed Erasmus ; "does this queer fellow go to the house of Giulietta ?"

The two friends arrived under the balcony of the goddess. A sweet voice called to Erasmus, who, disengaging himself violently from Frederick's arm, sprang into the house.

“Our poor friend Spicker is quite lost,” said Frederick, returning to his own house.

That day there was a brilliant festival in the environs of Florence, which gathered together all the fashionables. Giulietta wanted Erasmus to accompany her. They met there a very ugly little Italian, who paid assiduous court to Giulietta. Erasmus, wounded by the coquetry which prevented his beautiful companion from sending off this abortion, had a fit of jealousy, and rudely left the company. Giulietta, not seeing him return, went after him, and having found him in a solitary walk in the garden, reproached him softly, and throwing her snowy arms around his neck, left on his lips a kiss of fire. Erasmus lost his senses; he was about forgetting the whole universe, when Giulietta suddenly called him to himself, by a look whose coldness and severity drove him to despair. Both came back to the saloon.

Meanwhile the young Italian had seen the manoeuvre of Giulietta. Jealousy pricked him in his tara, he revenged himself by a sudden fire of sarcasms against the Germans. Erasmus went straight up to him—“I beg you, sir,” said he to him, “to put a stop to your impertinences against my countrymen, or I will throw you out of the window.

At this threat, the Italian furiously drew a dagger; but Spicker was too quick for him, for he seized him and threw him down so rudely that the unfortunate man expired with his skull fractured. They threw themselves upon Erasmus, who, seized with horror at the sight of the murder he had just committed, grew pale, staggered and fainted. When he came to his senses, he found himself lying upon a little couch, in a boudoir lighted by a voluptuous subdued light. Giulietta supported him in her arms. “Oh, wicked German!” said she with an accent of soft reproach; “what uneasiness you have caused me! There is no longer any safety for you in Florence, nor in all Italy; you must go and leave me forever.”

“No,” answered Spicker, “sooner will I die here; for is it not to die to go and live far away from you?”

But suddenly it seemed to him that a distant voice called to him sadly; it is the voice of his dear wife; Erasmus shudders; he is ashamed of himself. The words die upon his lips—but a kiss from Giulietta renews his madness. “Adored angel!” exclaimed he, “I will not separate myself from thee; why can we not be united from this hour by eternal bonds?”

At this moment, two candelabras filled with wax candles, lighted at the end of the boudoir a superb Venice glass.

“Friend,” said Giulietta, pressing Erasmus to her heart, “what thou desirest is impossible; but at least leave me thy *reflection*, oh my beloved, in order that I may not remain alone forever, deprived of thee.”

“What do you say?” exclaimed Erasmus, “*my reflection*?”

And at the same time he drew Giulietta before the glass, which reproduced their amorous position.

“How,” said he to her, “couldst thou keep my reflection?”

“Friend,” answered Giulietta, “the fugitive appearance that is called reflection, and that is traced upon all polished surfaces, can be detached from thy person, and become the property of the being that thou lovest most in the world. Dost thou refuse to leave me this memento? Wilt thou deprive me cruelly of this trifling pledge, which might recall to me the too fleeting happiness of our tenderness?”

“To thee! to thee now and forever!” exclaimed Erasmus, a prey to a delirium of frenzied love. “Take my reflection; and may no power of heaven or hell be able to separate it from thee!”

This exclamation having exhausted his strength, he panted in the embrace of the beautiful Italian. It seemed to him that his image detached itself from him, from his individuality, and that uniting itself closely to that of Giulietta, who held out her arms to it, both fled back into the perspective created by the mirror, and lost themselves in a fantastic vapor!

A mysterious terror nearly took away from Erasmus the use of his senses. One moment he thought he was alone;

and seeking gropingly an outlet through the infernal darkness, full of satanic and threatening voices, he descended staggeringly a flight of stairs, that seemed ready to crumble under his feet. As soon as he was in the street, at a few steps from the house of Giulietta, he was taken, gagged, and thrown into a carriage, which set off at a gallop. A man was seated by the side of Erasmus, who said to him—"Fear nothing, dear sir, Signora Giulietta has placed you in my care, in order that I might carry you safely out of the Italian dominions. It is annoying for you to be forced to abandon so beautiful a creature; and if you will give yourself up to me without reserve, I will try and save you from the vengeance of your enemies, and the pursuits of justice, and you can remain at ease near your beloved."

This proposition made Erasmus start. "I accept," said he to his conductor; "but by what means?"

"Do not trouble yourself about that," replied the unknown. "As soon as it is day, you will look at yourself long and attentively in a mirror. I will execute during this time certain operations with your reflection, and afterwards you shall judge yourself of the efficacy of my means."

"God of heaven! what a frightful misfortune!" exclaimed Erasmus.

"Of what misfortune do you speak, sir?" said the unknown.

"Alas!" replied Erasmus, "I have—I have left——"

"Ha! ha! ha! that is very funny!" interrupted sneeringly the man of secrets. "I understand you marvellously well. You have left your reflection with Giulietta. Very well, my friend; and at this rate you can at your ease travel quietly over mountains and through valleys, until you find again your worthy wife and your little 'Rasmus.'"

At this moment a troupe of young people who were singing on the road, passed near the carriage with torches. By their fugitive light which broke through the darkness, Erasmus recognized by his side Dr. Dapertutto. With a blow from

his fist he knocked him into the corner of the carriage, opened the door, sprang at a bound into the street, calling loudly to Frederick and his countrymen, for it was they who had just passed so near to him.

At the news of the pursuit that threatened Erasmus, Frederick returned hastily to the city with him, in order to consult on the means of avoiding it. On the morrow Erasmus started on horseback on the road to Germany.

Towards the middle of his journey, he arrived in a large city, and stopped at the hotel, worn out by fatigue and dying of hunger. He took a place at the table, but the servant perceiving in a large mirror that the chair occupied by Erasmus was reflected in it without the reflection of the traveller, remarked it by a whisper in the ear of his neighbor; the latter communicated it to another, and in the twinkling of an eye all at the table were emulating each other in talking about this wonder. Erasmus, while eating and drinking enough for four, was entirely unconscious that he had become the object of general curiosity; when an aged man came up to him, took him by the hand, led him before the glass, and said to him—"Sir, you have no reflection; you are the devil or one of his people!"

Erasmus, furious and confused, ran and shut himself up in his chamber, where the police soon came to signify that he was ordered to appear before the magistrates, provided with his reflection, under penalty of being driven out of the city.

Erasmus judged it most prudent to make his escape; but his story was already known all over the city, and the people gathered in a crowd before the hotel, and pursued him, throwing stones and mud, and crying out—"There goes the accursed man who has sold his reflection to the devil!"

Since that accident, everywhere he stopped he had all the mirrors veiled on arriving; and it was for that he was called derisively Gen. Suvarow, because this personage had this habit.

On arriving home, poor Spicker found near his wife a most

tender welcome. He thought that he should be able, in the calm of domestic life, to forget his lost reflection. After some time, the remembrance of Giulietta was nearly effaced from his mind. But one evening, while he was playing with his son near the stove, the child daubed his face with soot, and cried out to him—"Father! father! see how black you are!" and running to get a pocket mirror, he held it before Erasmus, and he looked into it himself. Struck with fright at not seeing the face of his father by the side of his own, he ran crying away, and related his grief to his mother.

The lost reflection destroyed the peace of the household. The wife of Erasmus uttered loud cries, and the neighbors came in. Erasmus, mad with fury and despair, fled from the house, and ran until he was out of breath in the fields. The image of Giulietta appeared to him then in all the brilliancy of her charms. "Oh, Giulietta! Giulietta!" exclaimed he; "she to whom I have sacrificed thee has repulsed me! Giulietta, I have no longer any one but thee in the world. I give myself up to thee; take me wholly and forever."

"And you shall be satisfied, my master," exclaimed the voice of Signor Dapertutto, who suddenly appeared at his side, as if by enchantment.

"Alas!" said Erasmus, "how shall I find her again?"

"She is near by here, and more in love with you than ever," replied Dapertutto. "Happy to possess you, wholly and forever, she will take, my dear sir, pleasure in giving you back your reflection."

"Oh, lead me to her quickly," interrupted Spicker.

"Softly, if you please," replied the doctor, with his former sneer and satanic smile. "It is necessary, before all, that the ties which bind you to your wife and child be broken, in order that Giulietta may have assurance of possessing you wholly. Take this phial!"

"Execrable man!" exclaimed Erasmus, with a gesture of horror, "what! you wish me to poison my wife and child?"

"Who speaks of poisoning?" said Dapertutto; "what I

give you is an elixir, of an exquisite taste, a true family liquor, with which I think you will be contented."

Erasmus already had the phial in his hands, and looked at it mechanically. He returned to his house, and found his wife and child uneasy to know what had become of him. The good woman would no longer recognize him, and maintained that the devil had taken his form to come and abuse her. Erasmus, driven to extremity, had for an instant the thought of using the phial. A tame dove came flying towards him, and picked at the cork, and fell dead! This incident recalled the poor bewitched man to himself, and he threw Dapertutto's elixir out of the window. A balsamic odor escaped from the broken phial. Erasmus ran to his chamber, shut himself up, and wept.

Towards midnight, the image of Giuletta appeared to him. His love and despair had no longer any bounds. "Oh, Giuletta!" cried he, "to see thee for the last time and then die!"

The door of the chamber opened without noise, and Giuletta, more beautiful than ever, found herself in the arms of Erasmus. After the first transports of their meeting, "Oh, my adored one!" exclaimed he, "if thou dost not wish me to become mad, take my life—but give me back my reflection?"

"But," said Giuletta, "I cannot do it until all the ties that attach thee to the world are broken without return."

"In that case," replied Erasmus, weeping, "if I cannot belong to thee as thou wishest, but by a crime, I prefer to die."

"My good Erasmus," said Giuletta, passing her arms around her lover's neck, and fixing on him a look full of fascination, "no one wishes thee to commit the crime that frightens thee; but if thou wishest, my beloved, to be the eternal spouse of my beauty, take this parchment, and write these words: 'I give to Dapertutto full power to break the ties which bind me to earth. I wish to belong wholly to Giuletta, whom I have freely chosen for the companion of my body and soul, for all eternity.'"

Erasmus felt the coldness of death running through his

nerves, whilst his lips burned under the kisses of the enchantress. Suddenly he saw rise up behind her Dapertutto, dressed in red, who presented to him an iron pen, saying : — “ Write and sign ! ” At the same time, a little vein in the left hand of Erasmus burst, and the blood flowed. — “ Sign, my beloved,” murmured Giulietta. The work was about to be accomplished—Erasmus had dipped the pen into his blood, and leaned over to write, when a white figure came out of the floor, and placed itself between him and Giulietta.

“ In the name of the Saviour,” said the figure, sobbing, “ do it not.”

It was the shade of his mother ! Erasmus threw the pen on the ground, and tore up the writing. Immediately the eyes of Giulietta threw out blood-red flames ; her beautiful face decomposed, and her whole body became covered with greenish sparks. Erasmus Spicker made the sign of the cross, and Giulietta and Dapertutto vanished grumblingly in a whirlwind of sulphurous smoke, which extinguished the light. The poor man remained long in a faint. At the break of day, a fresh breeze re-animated him ; he went back to his wife, whom he found still in bed. She held out her hand to him, and said, “ Poor friend, I have learnt this night in a dream, the adventure which deprived thee of thy reflection in Italy. I pity and pardon thee. The power of the demon is great, but God is stronger than he. I hope that now the charm is destroyed, for I have prayed for thee all night long. Here, take this mirror and look.”

Erasmus grew pale. The glass did not reproduce his face ; and he let it fall. “ Ah ! ” continued his wife, “ it appears that thou has not done sufficient penitence. Well, my dear husband, thou must go back to Italy, and seek for thy reflection. Some good saint will perhaps force the devil to give it back to thee. Kiss me, Erasmus, and mayst thou have a good journey ! When thou shalt have become a perfect man again, thou mayst come back to thy home ; and thou shalt receive a good welcome.”

At these words, madame Spicker turned in the bed, towards the wall, shut her eyes, and commenced snoring almost immediately. Erasmus, his heart bursting with grief, tried to kiss his child ; but the little one struggled, crying out like a whipped dog. The poor father placed him on the ground without saying a word, took his cane, and started immediately. Since that time he is travelling through the world. He met, one day, Peter Schlemihl, and these two unfortunate creatures made an agreement to travel in company, hiding each other's infirmities ; so that Erasmus Spicker furnished his travelling companion with a shadow, who, in turn was to lend the reflection that was wanting. But they could not agree, and they separated, calling each other hard names, like two blackguards.

*Kath. Krespel in Serapions-Brüder
Theil I (Kempel: ed. vol. I, p. 30)*

ANTONIA'S SONG.

I.

That evening, the brothers of the joyous Serapion Club had met early at Theodore's house. The winter wind whistled in long gusts, that whipped with snow the glasses, shaken in their leaden sashes; but a large grate shone under the cloak of the old chimney-piece; its warm light caressed with a thousand capricious reflections the brown-tinted benches which contrasted by their aged look, with the mad gaiety of the inhabitants of the room. Soon pipes begin to smoke, seats are taken, in accustomed order around a stand on which flames a flowing bowl of friendly punch. The assembly is complete; no one is missing at the call of the chairman; the Bohemian cup is filled and is circulated; the talk becomes general; the time passes, but the punch and the stories are renewed; the imaginations become gradually exalted, eccentricity reaches its utmost limit.—“Now, then, dear Theodore,” suddenly exclaimed one of the joyous livers, “the conversation will end if you refuse to gratify us with one of those stories that make you go to sleep standing, that you relate so well; but we must have something strange and moving, fantastic and anti-narcotic.”

“Let us drink,” said Theodore; “I have just what you want. I will, if you please, tell you a very droll anecdote of the life of the counsellor Krespel. This worthy personage, who existed in flesh and blood, was indeed the most singular man

that I ever met. When I came to the university of H——, to follow a course in philosophy, the whole city conversed about counsellor Krespel, and they related of him certain peculiarities of the most surprising character. Figure to yourself that Krespel enjoyed, from this time, the most distinguished reputation as a wise lawyer and practised diplomatist. A little prince of Germany, whose vanity excelled his domain, had requested Krespel's presence to entrust him with the drawing up of a memorial designed to justify his rights, touching territory, adjoining his principality, which he counted on claiming before the imperial court. The result of this affair was so satisfactory, that, in the excess of his joy, the prince swore to grant to his favorite, as a reward for the famous memorial, the most exorbitant wish that he could form. The honest Krespel, who had complained all his lifetime that he could not find a house to his mind, imagined that he would construct one according to his own fancy, for which the prince would pay the expense. The gracious sovereign even proposed to buy the land which the counsellor should choose; but Krespel was contented with a little garden that he possessed near his residence, and in one of the most picturesque sites imaginable. He occupied himself at first with getting together and having transported there all the materials for his future edifice; from that time they saw him every day, accoutred in a strange costume that he had fabricated himself, slackening the lime, sifting the sand, and piling up the stones in heaps.

All these preparations were finished without his having called in any architect, or appearing to have followed any plan. One fine morning, our man came to the city of H——, to seek for a skilful master mason, and request him to go the following day to his garden with a sufficient number of workmen to build his walls. The master mason, who naturally wished to discuss the price of his labor and the enterprise, was very much astonished when Krespel gravely assured him that such a precaution was entirely useless, and that all would

arrange itself, without dispute or embarrassment. At dawn on the following day, when the master-mason arrived at the place indicated with his workmen, he found a trench traced in a regular square, and Krespel said to him :—"It is here that the foundations of my house are to be dug ; then you will raise the four enclosing walls until I judge that they are high enough."

"Without windows or doors, and without partition walls ? Do you dream ?" exclaimed the master-mason, looking at Krespel as a madman.

"Have the kindness to do what I tell you, my good man," coldly replied the counsellor, "everything shall have its turn."

The certainty of being generously paid could alone determine the master to undertake this construction, which seemed absurd to him ; the workmen went gaily to work, laughing inwardly at the expense of the proprietor ; they worked day and night, drinking and eating well at the cost of the counsellor, who seldom left them. The four walls arose, constantly, until one morning Krespel cried out :—"That is enough !" The workmen stopped immediately like true automatons, and, leaving their scaffolding, came and ranged themselves in a circle around Krespel, and by their joking looks each one seemed to say to him : "Master, what are we to do ?"

"Room there ! room," exclaimed the counsellor, after several moments' reflection ; and, running to the other end of the garden, he came back again counting his steps, towards his square of walls ; then shaking his head discontentedly, he renewed this pantomime on each face of the enclosure, until at last, as if struck with a sudden idea, he rushed with his head down towards a point in the wall, crying out as loud as he could :—"Here, here, my boys, take the pickaxe and dig me a door !" He sketched at the same time on the wall the exact dimension of the issue that he wanted. It was the affair of a moment. Then he entered the house, and smiled like a man charmed with his masterpiece, when the master-mason observed to him that the four

walls were just the height of a two story house. Krespel walked around in the interior space, followed by the masons, carrying their pickaxes and hammers; he measured, calculated, and ordered by turns:—"Here a window, six feet high, and four broad; there a less opening, three feet high, and two broad." And the work followed his word.

Now then, my friends, it was at the time of this singular work, concerning which everybody was talking, that I arrived at H——, and nothing, indeed, was more amusing than to see certain boobies, with their noses stuck through the gratings of Krespel's garden, and uttering shouts every time that a stone was detached under the pick, every time that a new window was dug in the wall here and there, as if by enchantment. All the other labors on this house were executed in a like manner, without a reasonable plan in advance, and according to the inspirations entirely spontaneous in the brain of master Krespel. The piquant singularity of this enterprise, the acquired belief that it would definitely succeed beyond all hope, and more than anything else, the generosity of counsellor Krespel, animated the zeal of the workmen; thus, thanks to their activity, the house was very soon finished; it offered from the outside an appearance of the strangest singularity; for not one window was like the other, and every detail was in great disparity; but examined on the interior, it was indeed the most commodious habitation that it was possible to imagine; and I readily agreed to it myself when, after several days of more intimate acquaintance, master Krespel did the honors of it for me. He crowned his work by a ceremonious feast, to which the masons alone were admitted, and the journeymen and apprentices who had executed his plans. This splendid festival must have offered the most original sight. The most elegant dishes were there devoured by mouths little fitted to appreciate such delicacies; after the feast, the wives and daughters of these good people got up a ball, at which Krespel was not too dignified to dance in person; then, when his legs, a little intractable, refused him their service,

he armed himself with a violin, and made his guests dance until daylight, like real puppets.

The Tuesday following, I met master Krespel at the house of Professor M——. Nothing could have been stranger than the figure that he made that evening. Each one of his movements was stamped with so abrupt an awkwardness, that I trembled every moment with the expectation of seeing him the cause of some accident; but they were undoubtedly accustomed to his crochets, for the mistress of the house was not frightened in the least to see him now dance near a large tray of china porcelain, now throw his legs about before a mirror on a level with the floor, or draw his long cuffs amongst the crystal glasses that he hustled about one after another by the light of the wax candles. At supper the scene changed. From curious as he was, Krespel became talkative; he jumped unceasingly from one idea to another, and talked about everything with great volubility, in a voice by turns shrill or soft, quick or drawling. They spoke of music and of a fashionable composer. Krespel smiled and said lispingly:—"I wish that a hundred million devils would carry these scratch notes to the bottom of hell!" Then he suddenly cried in a voice of thunder:—"He is a seraphim for harmony! He is the genius of song!" And saying this his eyes became moistened with tears. It was necessary, in order not to think him mad or absent, to remember that one hour before he had spoken with enthusiasm of a celebrated singer. A hare having made its appearance on the table, Krespel put aside the bones, and called for the paws, that the professor's daughter, a charming little girl of five years, joyfully brought him. The children of the house seemed to have a great affection for the counsellor, and I was not long in discovering the cause, when, after supper, I saw Krespel draw from his pocket a box containing a steel turning lathe, with which he commenced turning, of the bones of the hare, a crowd of lilliputian toys that his little friends, arranged in a circle about him, shared amongst themselves with cries of pleasure. Suddenly the professor's niece, M——,

took a notion to say :—" What has become, dear master Krespel, of our good Antonia ? "

The counsellor made a grimace like an epicure who bites a sour orange ; his countenance darkened, and his look became very disagreeable, when he answered through his teeth,

" Our own dear Antonia ? "

The professor, who perceived the effect that this unlucky question produced, cast a reproachful look on his niece, and as if to divest the ill humor of Krespel :—" How go the violins ? " exclaimed he, pressing the hand of his guest in a friendly manner. Krespel's countenance changed in an instant.

" They go very well, my dear professor. I have begun to take to pieces Amati's celebrated violin, that a lucky chance has lately made me possessor of ; I hope that Antonia has done the rest. "

" Antonia is an amiable girl, " continued the professor.

" Yes, certainly, she is an angel ! " exclaimed Krespel, sobbing ; and, suddenly taking his hat and cane, he precipitately went away, like a man beside himself. Struck with this singularity, I questioned the professor concerning the history of the counsellor.

" Ah ! " said he to me, " he is a very singular man, who makes violins as skilfully as he draws up memorials ; as soon as he has finished one of these instruments, he tries it for an hour or two, and it is a delicious music to hear ; then he hangs it upon the wall with others, and never touches it again. If he succeeds in procuring the violin of a celebrated master, he buys it, plays on it once, takes it to pieces, and throws the pieces in a chest which is already nearly filled. "

" But who is Antonia ? " asked I impatiently.

" That is a mystery, " gravely replied the professor.

The counsellor lived several years ago, in an isolated house, with an old housekeeper. The singularity of his manners excited the curiosity of the neighborhood. To withdraw himself from it, he formed some acquaintances and showed him-

self in several drawing rooms. He made himself agreeable ; he was liked ; he was thought to be a bachelor ; he never spoke of his family. At the end of a certain time he was absent for several months. The evening of the day that he came back here, it was remarked that his apartment was illuminated ; then a ravishing woman's voice accorded with a harpsichord, accompanied by a violin, powerfully animated under the bow. The passers-by stopped in the street, and the neighbors listened at their windows in a charmed silence. Towards midnight the singing stopped ; the counsellor's voice was raised in a hard and threatening manner ; another man's voice seemed to reproach him, and, from time to time, the complaints of a young girl interrupted the dispute. Suddenly, a piercing cry, uttered by the young girl, ended the crisis ; then a singular noise, like that of people struggling together, is heard in the stairway. A young man comes out of the house weeping, throws himself into a travelling carriage that was waiting for him a few steps off, and all becomes mournfully silent again. Each one asked himself the secret of this drama. On the morrow, Krespel appeared as calm and serene as usual, and no one dared to question him. But the old housekeeper could not resist the temptation of whispering, to whoever would listen to her, that the counsellor had brought with him a beautiful young girl whom he called Antonia ; that a young man, madly in love with Antonia, had followed them, and nothing but the anger of the counsellor would have driven him from the house. As to the relation that existed between the counsellor and Antonia, it was a secret to which the old housekeeper had not the solution. She only said that master Krespel odiously confined her, hardly ever taking his eyes from her, and not even allowing her to sing, to amuse herself, whilst playing the harpsichord. Thus Antonia's song, which had only once been heard, became the marvellous legend of neighborhood ; and no singer could succeed in gaining applause in the city : " There is no one," said they, " but Antonia who knows how to sing." All that the professor had told me

made so strong an impression on my mind, that I dreamed of it every night. I became madly in love, and I only thought of the means of introducing myself, at whatever cost, into Krespel's house, to see the mysterious Antonia, swear an eternal love for her, and rescue her from her tyrant. Unfortunately for my romance, things came about in a very peaceable manner; and hardly had I met the counsellor two or three times, and flattered his mania by talking of violins, than he asked me himself, and in the simplest manner, to come and see him at his house. God only knows what I then felt; I thought that the sky was opening. Master Krespel made me examine all of his violins very carefully, without omitting one, and truly there were more than thirty of them! One of them, of very ancient construction, was suspended higher than the others, and ornamented with a crown of flowers. Krespel told me that it was the masterpiece of an unknown master, and that the sounds drawn from it exercised an irresistible magnetism on the senses, the influence of which forced the somnambulist to reveal his secret thoughts.

"I have never had the courage," said he, "to take this instrument to pieces for the purpose of studying its construction. It seems to me that that there is life in it, and that I should become a murderer; I very seldom play upon it, and only for my Antonia, who experiences, whilst listening to it, the sweetest sensations."

At the name Antonia, I trembled.

"My good counsellor," said I to him, in an accent of caressing insinuation, "would you not do me the favor to play on it for a moment for me?" Krespel in an ironical manner, and in a nasal tone, answered me, emphasizing every syllable:—"No, my good master student."

This fashion disconcerted me. I did not reply, and Krespel finished, showing me his cabinet of curiosities.

Before separating, he drew from a casket a folded paper, which he gave me, saying, very gravely:—"Young man, you love the arts: accept this, then, as a precious remembrance."

Then, without waiting for an answer, he gently pushed me towards the door, which he shut in my face. I opened the paper; it contained a little piece of a violin string, an eighth of an inch long, to which was appended this inscription: "Fragment of a string with which the divine Stamitz strung his violin when he played at his last concert." In spite of the strange dismissal which the counsellor had given me, I could not resist the desire of visiting him again; and it was fortunate that I did so, for, at this second visit, I found Antonia with him, busied in arranging the pieces of a violin that he was examining. She was an extremely pale young girl, that a breath had animated, and who had afterwards become white and cold as alabaster. I was astonished to find in Krespel, that day, an ease and cordiality which contrasted strongly with the tyrannic jealousy of which the professor had spoken. I talked freely before him with Antonia, without his appearing to be annoyed; my visits were renewed, and I was welcomed; a sweet and free intimacy grew up between us, unknown to the gossips, who would not have failed to characterize it as scandalous.

The singularities of Krespel often amazed me; but I confess that Antonia alone was the magnet that attracted me to his house, and made me tolerate his extreme capriciousness of character. Every time that I led the conversation to the subject of music, he became as irritable as a tormented cat, and, with good or ill grace, I was obliged to give way and suddenly take my leave.

One evening, I found him in a gay humor; he had taken to pieces an old Cremona violin, and discovered an important secret in art. Profiting by his satisfaction, I succeeded this time in making him talk about music; we criticised the pretensions of several virtuosos admired by the world. Krespel laughed at my sallies; Antonia fixed her great eyes upon me. "You do not," said I to her, "in singing, and accompaniment, follow the example of any of our pretended conquerors of difficulties?" The pale cheeks of the young girl became

tinged with a sweet blush ; and, as if some electric spark had pervaded her whole being, she sprang towards the harpsichord,—opened her lips,—she was about to sing, when Krespel drawing her back, and pushing me away, cried out in the voice of a stentor :—“ Young man ! young man ! young man ! ”

Then suddenly resuming his former ceremonious manners, he added :

“ I am truly too polite, my dear master student, to beg the devil to strangle you ; but it is pretty late, as you see, and it is dark enough for you to break your neck without troubling me to throw you down stairs. So then, oblige me by going home, and keep in good remembrance your old friend, if—do you understand ?—if by chance you should no longer find him at home.”

At these words, he embraced me as at our first meeting, and led me out without giving me an opportunity to throw a last sad look at Antonia. Professor M—— was not backward in rallying me, and told me that I was forever scratched from the counsellor's books. I left H—— with a wounded soul ; but, by degrees, absence and distance softened this violent grief ; the image of Antonia, the remembrance of that heavenly song that I had been permitted to hear, became effaced, were veiled insensibly by a mysterious slumbering in my thoughts.

Two years later, I was travelling in the south of Germany. The city of H—— was again in my path ; as I approached it, an agonized sensation weighed upon me ; it was in the evening ; the church spires appeared on the horizon in the blue mist which precedes the darkness of night ; I could hardly breathe, I had to leave the carriage and continue the journey on foot. By degrees this sensation took a stranger character ; I imagined that I heard in the air modulations of a sweet and fantastic song ; then I distinguished voices that were singing a chant.

“ What is that ? what is that ? ” exclaimed I, in a frightened tone which surprised a passer.

“Do you not see,” said this man, the cemetery on your left? It is an interment that is taking place!” At this moment the descending road commanded a view of the cemetery, and I saw in effect, that they were filling up the grave. My heart felt a pang; it seemed to me that they were shutting up in this grave a whole life of hope and happiness. At a few steps from the city, I met professor M——, leaning on the arm of his niece; they were both returning from this lugubrious ceremony. They passed near me, without being aware of it. The young girl was weeping.

I could not restrain the impatience which was consuming me. Instead of entering the city, I sent my servant with my baggage to a hotel that I knew, then I ran breathlessly towards Krespel's little house. On opening the garden gate, I saw in the linden walk the counsellor, conducted by two persons dressed in mourning, between whom he was struggling desperately. He wore his old gray coat, which he had cut himself and fashioned in so strange a manner; his person was not in the least changed, except that he wore a long piece of crape hanging from his little three-cornered hat. He had buckled around him a black belt, in which he wore a violin-bow instead of a sword. I shuddered at the sight of this. “He is mad!” said I to myself. The men who accompanied him stopped at the door of the house. There Krespel embraced them, laughing in a guttural voice; they retired, and his eyes then fell upon me.

“You are welcome, master student; you will understand me;” and, taking me by the hand, he led me into the closet where his violins were arranged. A broad black crape covered them; but the unknown master's violin was no longer there; a wreath of cypress marked its place. I understood all. “Antonia! Antonia!” exclaimed I, madly. But Krespel stood by me, with his arms folded, staring fixedly.

“When she expired,” said he to me in a voice which he endeavored in vain to restrain, “the soul of that violin departed, bursting with a mournful sound, and the sounding

board splitting in pieces. That old instrument which she loved, could not survive her ; I have shut it up near her in her coffin."

On finishing this speech, the counsellor's physiognomy became suddenly changed ; he commenced singing, in a cracked and grating voice, a comic song ; and it was frightful to see him jumping on one foot around the room, whilst the floating crape on his hat, brushing over all the violins, also brushed against my face. I could not restrain a piercing cry ; he stopped short :—" My little man, my little man, why dost thou scream so ? hast thou seen the angel of death ? he always precedes the ceremony."

Then he came into the middle of the room, and, raising the bow which he carried by his side, in both hands above his head, he violently broke it and threw the pieces far away from him.

" Ah ! " exclaimed he, now I am free, free, free ! I will make no more violins ! no ! no more violins ! "

The unfortunate Krespel howled these words in infernal cadence, and continued his course, hopping around the room. Frozen with fear, I started to fly ; he stopped me with his nervous arm.

" Stop, master student, do not take my convulsions for madness ; all this is inflicted upon me, because, several days ago, I had a dressing gown cut, in which I wished to look like Destiny or God ! "

The unfortunate man told me a thousand extravagancies, until, exhausted by his exaltation, he fell almost insensible. His old housekeeper ran on hearing my call. I left him in her arms. When I saw professor M—— again, I told him that I thought counsellor Krespel mad.

" I hope that it is not so," answered he. " The fermentation of thought, which would destroy the brain of any other man, is dissipated by action in the case of our poor friend. His disordered agitation exhausting his nervous excitement, will save him. The sudden death of Antonia crushed him.

But let a day or two pass, and I engage that he will resume, of his own accord, his habits of every day life."

The prediction was realized. On the morrow, Krespel was very calm; he only repeated that he would make no more violins, and that he would never touch one again during his life.

All this had not enlightened me as to the mystery which enveloped the connection of Antonia with counsellor Krespel. The more I thought of it, the more some instinct unceasingly told me that there had existed between these two beings something odious to become acquainted with. Antonia always appeared to me in my dreams like a victim. I would not leave H—— without provoking an explanation which must, perhaps, lead to the revelation of a crime. I became excited hourly. I was about to burst, like a thunder clap, into the counsellor's closet. I found him as calm and smiling as an innocent man; seated near a little table, he was turning children's toys.

"Execrable man," exclaimed I, "how canst thou taste a moment's peace, whilst thy conscience must gnaw thy heart like a serpent's tooth?"

The counsellor fixed on me an astonished look, and, laying his chisel down by his side:—"What is the meaning of this, my very dear sir? Take the trouble to be seated."

So much coolness irritated me more; and I accused him loudly with the murder of Antonia, swearing that in my quality of advocate I would, by all the means in my power, provoke a judicial inquiry into the cause of this misfortune. My exaltation became gradually exhausted in words. When I had ended, the counsellor had not ceased to look at me very tranquilly.

"Inconsiderate youth," he then said to me, in a voice whose solemn gravity confounded me; "young man, by what right dost thou wish to penetrate the secrets of a life that was always unknown to thee? Antonia is no more! What matters the rest to thee!"

There was at this time, in the calmness of this man, something peculiarly sad. I felt that I had acted indiscreetly ; I asked his pardon, supplicating him to relate to me some particulars of the life of the angel that I mourned. He then took me by the hand, led me to the balcony, and with his eyes bent upon the garden, he confided to me a story, of which my memory has only retained that which related to Antonia. Counsellor Krespel had, in his youth, the passion of collecting at any price violins formerly belonging to the great masters. His researches led him to Italy, to Venice, where he heard, at the Theatre San Benedetto, the famous singer Angela. Her ravishing beauty made no less impression than her talents on the heart of the counsellor. A secret marriage united them ; but the beautiful songstress, angel at the theatre, was a devil at home ; Krespel, after a thousand and one stormy scenes, made up his mind to take refuge in the country, where he consoled himself as well as he could with an excellent Cremona violin. But the lady, jealous, like a pure-blooded Italian, came to arouse him in his retreat. One day, she entered the summer-house where Krespel was improvising a whole musical world. She placed her pretty head upon her husband's shoulder, and looked at him with an eye filled with love. The counsellor, lost in the regions of the ideal, handled his bow with so much ardor, that he scratched, without intending it, the satin neck of Angela. She sprang up furiously : — " German beast ! " exclaimed she ; and, angrily seizing the Cremona violin, she broke it into a thousand pieces on the marble table. The counsellor was at first petrified ; then one of those nervous movements which cannot be analyzed, contracted his limbs ; he threw the beautiful songstress out of the window of his own house, and fled to Germany. But, on the road, when he thought of the strangeness of the event, and although he had not acted with premeditation, he felt the most painful regret ; for he remembered that the lady had flattered him incessantly with the sweet hope of making him a father. Imagine then his sur-

prise when, eight months afterward, he received in a remote part of Germany, one of the most tender letters, in which his dear wife, without recalling in any manner the accident at the country seat, announced to him the birth of a daughter, and entreated him to come back to Venice. Krespel, suspecting some trick, made inquiries : he learned, in effect, that the beautiful Italian had fallen on some flower beds that had softened her fall, and that the only result of the flight that this nightingale had taken out of the window, was a fortunate change of character. The lady was no longer capricious, or choleric ; the conjugal remedy had performed a miracle. The good counsellor was so touched by this news, that he immediately ordered the horses to be put to his carriage. But hardly had he got in, than he reflected.

“ Devil ! ” said he to himself, “ if the lady should not turn out to be radically cured, would it be necessary to throw her out of the window again ? ” This question was difficult to solve.

Krespel went back to his house, wrote a long letter to his dear wife, in which he congratulated her on his daughter's having, like himself, a little mark behind the ear : then, he remained in Germany. New letters passed between them. Protestations of love, projects for the future, complaints and soft prayers flew like doves, from Venice to H——. One fine day Angela came to Germany, and attracted attention to her singing in the theatre at F——. Although she was not extremely young, she inspired passions, made some happy, and an infinity of victims.

Meanwhile, Krespel's little daughter had grown up ; she was called Antonia, and her mother found in her a singer of nearly her own force. Krespel, knowing that his wife was so near him, was dying with a desire to embrace his child ; but the fear of the follies of the lady restrained him, and he remained at home, amongst his violins, that never contradicted him.

At that time a young musician, of great promise, fell in love with Antonia ; Krespel, consulted, was pleased to have

his daughter marry an artist who had no rival on the violin; and he expected to hear from day to day the news of the marriage, when a letter sealed with black, and directed in an unknown hand, came to announce to him that Angela had just died of pleurisy, the night before the wedding of Antonia was to take place; the last prayer of the songstress was to Krespel to come and take charge of the orphan: he set off without losing a minute.

The young bridegroom, who had not left Antonia in this hour of tribulation, was present on the arrival of the father.

One evening when they were together, and Krespel was thinking of the departed, Antonia placed herself at the harpsichord, and sang a mournful air; it would have been said, on hearing her, that the soul of her mother trembled in her voice. Krespel could not bear it; sobs stifled his voice; he arose, clasped the young girl in his arms, and pressed her closely.

"Oh! no," exclaimed he, "if thou lovest me, sing no more! It breaks my heart to hear thee! Never sing more."

Antonia threw upon her father a long gaze; and in this look there were tears for a dream of happiness just ready to vanish. Her black hair fell in ebony folds, on her snowy shoulders:—her form bowed like a broken stalk:—Krespel wept at seeing her so beautiful: for a fatal instinct had revealed the future to him. Antonia became paler, and in her face the counsellor had discovered a sign of death. He contemplated with fear, this germ, which every hour would develop.

"No, no, my friend," said the counsellor afterwards to doctor R——, a famous physician, "no, those brilliant red spots which color, when she sings, her cheeks, do not proceed from animation! No, that is what I fear."

"Well, then," replied the doctor, "I shall not be under the necessity of dissimulating with you my own uneasiness, either that this young girl has made premature efforts to sing, or that nature has left in so fine a work an organic defect. I

believe that the sonorous sound of her voice, which exceeds the power of her age, is an indication of danger, and I do not give her six months to live, if you allow her to sing."

The counsellor trembled at this threat: it seemed to him that he saw a fine bush covered with its first blossoms, and that a pitiless hand was about cutting from the root. His resolution was rapidly taken; he opened before Antonia the two future courses; one, passing through marriage and the seductions of an artist's life, would, perhaps, in a short time lead to the tomb; the other would preserve to an old father a cherished child, his only joy and his final happiness. Antonia understood the sacrifice that her father implored. She threw herself into his arms without a word in answer. Krespel dismissed the bridegroom, and, two days afterwards, he arrived at H——, with his daughter, his treasure. But the young man could not thus renounce the felicity which he had promised himself. He followed Krespel, and met him at his door. The counsellor rudely repulsed him.

"Oh!" exclaimed poor Antonia, "to see him, to hear him once more, and then die!"

"To die, to die!" repeated the counsellor, wildly: "to see thee die, oh my child! thou, the only being that binds me to the world! Well then, let it be as thou wishest: and if thou diest, do not curse thy unfortunate father."

The sacrifice was decided upon. The musician was to take his place at the harpsichord. Antonia sang; Krespel took his violin and played without ceasing, and with his eyes fixed upon his daughter, until he saw the purple spots appear on her pale cheeks. Then he violently interrupted the singing, and made a sign to the musician to go. Antonia, seeing him about to leave, uttered a piercing cry and fell fainting.

"I thought for a moment," said Krespel to me, on finishing the relation of this sad story, "that my poor child was dead. I seized the accursed bridegroom by the shoulders.

" 'Go,' cried I to him, 'go quickly! for my daughter is so pale, that I do not know what restrains me from plunging a

knife into your heart, to warm her and color her cheeks with your blood !'

"I had, undoubtedly, in saying these words, so terrible an aspect, that the miserable man rushed down stairs like a madman, and I have never seen him since."

When the counsellor raised his daughter, she opened her eyes and closed them again immediately. The physician, whom they ran hastily to seek, said that the accident, though serious, would probably have no serious consequences. A few days after, she seemed nearly recovered. Her filial love offered a touching picture ; she had devoted herself, with the most amiable resignation, to his mania and his caprices ; she assisted him with angelic patience to take to pieces the old violins that he bought, and in making new ones.

"No, dear father," said she to him often with a melancholy smile, "I will sing no more, since it afflicts thee ; I will no longer live or breath but for thee !" And Krespel, whilst listening, felt happy.

When he had bought the famous violin that he had placed in Antonia's coffin, the young girl, seeing that he was about to take this one to pieces also, looked at him sadly.

"What ! that one also ?" said she. Krespel at the same time, felt within himself a voice that urged him to spare, even to try this instrument. Hardly had he preluded, than his daughter exclaimed, clapping her hands,

"Ah ! but that is my voice, that is my voice ! I still sing !"

And it was true. The pure notes of the marvellous violin seemed to fall from the sky. Krespel was moved : the bow under his hand created prodigies. Sometimes Antonia said to him with a sweet smile,

"Father, I should like to sing." And Krespel took the violin, and always drew from it delicious variations.

A short time before my second journey to H——, the counsellor thought that he heard, during a still night, the harpsichord resound in the neighboring room ; he thought

that he heard the fingers of Antonia's bridegroom run rapidly over the ivory keys. He tried to arise ; but an iron hand seemed to restrain him. Then it seemed to him that his daughter's voice murmured feebly, as in a distance : gradually the modulations came nearer, it was a fantastic crescendo, each vibration of which pierced his heart like an arrow. Suddenly a brilliant halo chased darkness from the room ; he saw Antonia in the arms of her lover, who supported her. Their lips touched, and yet the heavenly song continued. Struck with supernatural fear, counsellor Krespel remained thus, until daylight, in an indescribable state of anguish. A leaden stupor paralyzed his thoughts. When the first ray of the rising sun cast its rosy tints under the curtains of his bed, he arose as if from a painful dream, and hastened to Antonia's chamber. She was extended on the sofa, her eyes shut, her hands joined ; a sweet, but fixed smile, lingered upon her pale lips.

She resembled the angel of virginity asleep.—Her soul had returned to God !

*Das mayoral (Nacht's Lücke in Collet's
manier, I think.
Reimbursed III, p. 414*

THE WALLED-UP DOOR.

On the solitary banks of a northern lake, is still seen the ruins of an old manor house which bears the name of R—sitten. Arid heaths surround it on all sides. The horizon is shut in one side by water, calm, deep, and with a leaden color ; on the other rises a wood of pine trees, which stretch out their black arms in the haze like spectres. The sky always in mourning, only opens to funereal birds. But at a quarter of a league from this mournful landscape, the aspect changes : a gay village appears suddenly in the flowery meadows. At the end of the village a wood of alders is growing greenly, not far from which is shown the first foundations of a castle that one of the lords of R—sitten proposed to erect in this oasis of natural planting and growth ; but the heirs of this lord have forgotten this edifice already commenced, and the baron Roderick of R——, although he was resigned to sharing with the screech-owls the patrimonial castle, had in no-wise busied himself about finishing the new castle projected by his ancestors. He had satisfied himself with repairing the most dilapidated parts of the old castle, to shut himself up in it as well as he could, with a handful of followers as taciturn and uncommunicative as their master. He killed time by riding here and there, on the borders of the lake ; and very rarely showed himself at the village amongst his vassals, where his name alone served as a bugbear to the children. In one of the highest towers, Roderick had placed an observatory, fur-

nished with all the astronomical instruments known at that time. It was there that he often passed days and nights, in company with an old steward who partook of all his singularities. There was attributed to him in the country round about, very extended acquaintance with the science of magic, and some went so far as to say that he had been driven from Courland for having had open relations with the evil spirit.

Roderick had a superstitious love for the lordly ruins of his family; he had the idea of entailing this property, in order to give it its feudal importance. But neither Hubert, the son of this Roderick, nor the actual inheritor, who bore the same name as his grandfather Roderick, would follow the example of their parent; and, instead of residing with him in the ruins of R—sitten, they had established themselves in their domain in Courland, where life was easier and not so gloomy. The baron Roderick took care of two sisters of his father, wrecks of nobility, to whom he extended his hospitality. These two ladies had to serve them only an aged female servant; all three of whom occupied a wing of the castle. The kitchen occupied the basement: a kind of dilapidated pigeon house served as habitation to an infirm hunter who filled the office of guard. The remainder of the servants lived in the village with the steward.

Every year, towards the last days of autumn, the castle quitted the lugubrious silence which weighed upon it like a cold shroud. The packs of dogs shook its old walls with their long barkings, and the friends of baron Roderick joyously celebrated the hunting parties of their host, who gave them an opportunity of capturing a large quantity of wolves and wild boars. These celebrations lasted for six weeks, during which the castle resembled a hotel open to every comer. For the rest, the baron Roderick never neglected his paramount duties. He administered justice to the vassals, aided in this part of his attributes by lawyer V——.

His family had exercised, from father to son, and from time almost immemorial, the jurisdiction of R—sitten. In the

year 179—, the worthy advocate, whose silvered head counted more than sixty winters, said to me one day with a good natured smile on his face :

“Cousin,” (I was his grand nephew, but he always called me cousin, on account of the similarity of our baptismal names,) “cousin, I have a desire to take thee to R—sitten. The north wind, the cold breezes from the water and the first frosts will give to thy organs a little of that vigor which would make thy health firmer. Thou wilt render me, there, more than one service in copying law papers, which accumulate every year more and more ; and thou wilt learn, for thy personal gratification, the trade of a free huntsman.”

God knows how joyous the proposition of my uncle made me ! On the morrow we were rolling in a good coach, warmly equipped with ample furs, through a country which became at every step wilder, as we advanced towards the north, through great quantities of snow and interminable forests of pine. On the road, my great uncle related to me anecdotes of the life of baron Roderick, (the owner of the castle.) He told me with picturesque illustrations the habits and adventures of the old lord of R—sitten ; and he complained at seeing that a taste for this savage life was forestalling all the thoughts of his actual successor, a young man, who until that time had shown himself to be good humored and in delicate health. For the rest, he recommended me to take my ease at the castle. He ended by describing the lodging that I should inhabit with him, which joined on one side the old audience hall of the lord of the castle, and on the other the habitation of the two ladies of whom I have already spoken. We arrived thus, in the middle of the night, on the territory of R—sitten.

There was a celebration at the village. The steward's house, illuminated from top to bottom, resounded to the music of dances, and the only tavern in the place was filled with gay guests. We soon found ourselves again on the road, already nearly impassable and covered with snow. The north

wind made the waters of the lake moan and the branches of the pines crack with ominous sound ; and in the midst of a kind of white sea was traced in black the profile of the manor, whose portcullis was down. A silence of death reigned in it ; not a light escaped from its lattice-like loopholes.

“Hallo ! Franz, Franz !” cried my great uncle, “Hallo ! get up ! The snow freezes in falling from the sky, and a fire even from hell would do us a great deal of good !”

A watch dog answered first to this appeal ; then a little movement was heard ; the reflection of a torch disturbed the shadows, keys turned heavily in the locks, and the old Franz saluted us with—

“Good morning, Master Justice ; I give you a welcome this diabolical weather !”

Franz, accoutered with a livery in which his insignificant body moved about too much at ease, made one of the most comic faces on receiving us, as he was unbooted. A simple civility was impressed on his wrinkled features ; but, in spite of all that, his ugliness was nearly compensated for, by the warmth of his welcome.

“My worthy sir,” said Franz, “nothing is prepared to receive you ; the chambers are frozen, and the beds are not furnished ; and then, the wind blows from every quarter through the broken panes ; you could not stay in them, even with fire !”

“How do you say, rascal,” exclaimed my great uncle, shaking off the hoar frost from his furs, “how do you say, you the guardian of this barrack, and do you not watch over it and repair it when needful ? So, my chamber is uninhabitable ?”

“Very nearly,” replied Franz, bowing to the ground, for I had just sneezed explosively. “The chamber of Mr. Justice is, at the present time, heaped with rubbish. Three days ago the ceiling of the audience hall fell with a violent shock.”

My great uncle was about to swear like one possessed, but he restrained himself suddenly, and, turning towards me and tucking his ears under his foxskin cap :

"Cousin," said he, "we will do as we can, and try, above all, not to risk another question on account of this accursed castle: otherwise it would be possible to tell us things a thousand times more discouraging. Now then," continued he, addressing himself to Franz, "can you not put in order another room for us?"

"Your desires, sir, have been anticipated," replied the old servant, quickly: and, walking before us to point out the way, he conducted us by a little narrow stairway into a long gallery, where the light of a single torch lent to the least objects fantastic forms. At the end of this gallery, which turned about in various directions, forming multiplied angles, he led us through several damp and unfurnished rooms; then opening a door, he introduced us into a chamber where there was an ample fire crackling on the hearth. This joyous sight put me in a good humor; but my great uncle stopped in the middle of the room, and, throwing around him a look agitated with some inquietude, said in a solemn and moving tone,

"Is this, then, the place that is to serve hereafter for receptions?"

Franz took several steps towards the other end of the room, and, by the light of the flambeau which he carried, I perceived on the wall a high and broad white spot which represented the dimensions of a walled-up door. In the meantime, Franz hastened to prepare all that was necessary for us. The table was diligently spread, and, after a comfortable supper, my great uncle set about brewing a bowl of punch, the contents of which was to procure for us with its last drops the reward of a long and peaceable slumber. When his service was no longer needed, Franz discreetly quitted us. Two wax candles and the expiring fire on the hearth, made the gothic ornaments of the room in which we were, dance about in a thousand capricious fashions. Paintings representing hunting and war-like scenes were suspended on the walls, and the vacillating fire seemed to cause the personages in these paintings to move. I remarked family portraits, the size of life, and which pre-

served, doubtlessly, the features of the most notable members of the feudal line of R—sitten. The old leather covered coffers, standing against the wainscoting, blackened by time, brought out with more character the white spot, the sight of which had first struck me. I supposed that it was simply on account of there having been formerly a communicating door, since walled up, without the workmen having taken care to hide the mason work with a coating of paint to correspond with the other decorations of the room. For the rest, my imagination was occupied much more with all kinds of dreams than with the least reality. I peopled the castle with supernatural apparitions, which I gradually became afraid of myself. Finally the chance or the occasion operated so, that I found in my pocket a book, from which the young people of that time were inseparable; it was the *Visionary*, by Schiller. This reading destroyed the activity of my imagination. I was plunged into a kind of half hallucination, produced by the scene which passed before my eyes, when light, but well timed footsteps, seemed to me to traverse the room. I listened: a dull groan is heard, stops, then re-commences; I think that I hear scratching behind the white spot which represents the walled-up door. There is no longer any doubt, it is some poor animal that has been shut in there. I go and strike my foot on the floor, and the noise will cease, or the captive animal will utter some cry. But, oh terror! the scratching is continued with a kind of savageness; but no other sign of life is given; my blood is already freezing in my veins; the most incoherent ideas assail me, and behold me nailed to my chair, without daring to make a movement, when at last, the mysterious claw ceases to scratch, and the footsteps commence again. I rise as if moved by a spring, I advance towards the end of the room, hardly lighted by an expiring torch; suddenly a current of cold air is felt on my cheeks, and at the same time the moon, piercing a cloud, lights up, with a trembling reflection, a full length portrait of a man with a very repulsive countenance; then voices, which have

nothing of earth in them, murmur around me these words, resembling sobs :

“ Go no farther, thou wilt fall into the abyss of the invisible world ! ”

Then the noise of a door which is violently shut, makes the apartment in which I am tremble ; I hear distinctly some one running in the gallery ; then the steps of a horse resound on the paving of the court ; the portcullis is raised, and some one goes out, then re-enters almost immediately. Is all this reality, or is it nothing but a dream of my mind in its delirium ? Whilst I am wrestling with my doubts, I hear my great uncle sighing in the neighboring chamber. Is he awake ? I take my light and enter ; he is struggling with the anguish of a cruel dream. I seize his hand, I awake him ; he utters a stifled cry, but immediately recognizing me,

“ Thanks, cousin,” said he, “ I had a bad dream on account of this lodging, and certain old things which I have seen take place in it. But, enough ! it is better to go to sleep again, and not think longer about it.”

With these words, he wrapped himself up in his covering, drew the sheet over his face, and appeared to go to sleep. But, when I had extinguished the fire and retired to my little bed, I heard the worthy great uncle say his prayers in a murmur, and mechanically I did the same.

On the morrow, at an early hour, we commenced our operations. Towards noon, my great uncle went with me to pay a visit to the ladies, to whom Franz was sent to announce us. After a long attendance, an old hump-backed female servant, dressed in a silk dress, dead leaf color, came to introduce us. The two ladies of the castle, dressed in the ancient style, looked to me like two puppets ; they stared at me in such a manner, that I should have laughed in their faces, if my great uncle had not hastened to say, in his customary joyful manner, that I was a relation of his, a young law student, come to aid him at R—sitten. The faces of these two antique females lengthened in such a manner, as to prove that they had

little confidence in the success of my first appearance. This whole visit nauseated me. Wholly under the impression of the incidents that had agitated me the night before, I was (one could not be more so) disposed to see witches under the finery with which these two ladies of R—sitten were spangled like church banners.

Their strange faces, their little eyes bordered with a bloody red, their pointed noses, and their nasal accents, could only legitimately belong to people from the other world.

The evening of this first day, as I was with my great uncle seated in our chamber, my feet on the fender, and my chin reclining on my breast,

“What the devil has bewitched thee since yesterday?” exclaimed the excellent counsellor. “Thou dost neither eat nor drink, and thou look’st like a grave digger.”

I thought that it was my duty not to hide from my great uncle what caused my uneasiness. Whilst listening to me he became very serious.

“That is very strange,” exclaimed he, “I saw in a dream all that thou hast just told me. I saw a hideous phantom enter the room, drag himself to the walled-up door, and scratch at that door with such fury, that its fingers were all torn and bleeding; then it descended, took a horse from the stable and put him back again immediately. It was at this time you awoke me, and that, come to myself, I surmounted the secret horror which always springs from the least communication with the invisible world.”

I dared not question the old gentleman. He perceived it.

“Cousin,” said he to me, “hast thou the courage to wait with me, with open eyes, the next visit of the phantom?”

I accepted resolutely this proposition.

“Very well, then, to-night,” continued he; “I have confidence in the pious motive which leads me to wrestle with the evil genius of this castle. Whatever may be the result of my project, I wish that you may be present at all that may happen, in order to be able to bear witness to it. I hope, with God’s aid, to

break the charm which banishes from this domain the heirs of R—sitten. But, if I fail in my enterprise, I shall at least have sacrificed myself to the holiest of causes. As for thee, cousin, thou wilt be present, but no peril menaces thee. The evil spirit has no power over thee.

Franz served us, as the night before, with an excellent supper and a bowl of punch ; then he returned. When we were alone, the full moon was shining with a most brilliant light ; the north wind whistled through the forest trees, and every minute the glass creaked as it moved in the leaden sashes. My great uncle had placed his repeater on the table. It struck twelve. Then the door opened with a crash, and the steps that I had heard the night before commenced again to draw themselves along the floor. My great uncle turned pale, but he rose without faltering, and turned towards the direction from which the noise proceeded, the left arm leaning on his hip, and the right hand extended, in an heroic attitude. Sobs mingled with the noise of the steps, then was heard the forcible scratching against the walled-up door. Then my great uncle advanced towards it, and cried out in a loud voice :

“ Daniel ! Daniel ! what doest thou here at this hour ? ”

A lamentable cry answered to these words, and was followed by the noise of a heavy fall. “ Ask pardon, at the foot of God’s throne,” continued my great uncle, in a more and more animated tone of voice : “ and if God does not pardon thee, go away from this castle, where there is no longer a place for thee ! ”

It seemed to me that a long groan lost itself outside amid the growling of the storm ; my great-uncle came back slowly to his arm chair. He had an inspired look ; his eyes sparkled like stars ; he seated himself again before the fire, and his hands were joined, his eyes turned toward heaven ; he appeared to pray.

After some moments of silence : “ Well, cousin,” said he to me, “ what thinkest thou of all that ? ”

Seized with fear and respect, I kneeled before the old man,

and covered his hands with tears. But he took me in his arms, pressed me closely to his heart and added,

“Let us go to rest now; calm is hereafter established near us.”

In effect, nothing more troubled my dreams, and the following days I succeeded in making myself merry freely, and more than once, at the expense of the old baronesses, who in spite of their ridiculous appearance were none the less good creatures.

A short time after our installation, the baron Roderick himself arrived at the castle with his wife and equipages, for the hunting season. The invited guests hastened to the castle from every quarter, which took a festive appearance very different from that which it had during the remainder of the year. When the baron came to see us he appeared very much dissatisfied with the change of lodging that lawyer V—— had been obliged to submit to. On looking at the walled-up door, his look became gloomy, and he passed his hand over his forehead, as if to drive away a painful remembrance. He rudely scolded poor Franz for having chosen for us so dilapidated a domicile, and begged my great uncle to order whatever he wanted without stint, and to use everything in the castle as if it were his own property. I remarked that the proceedings of the baron with the lawyer were not only very polite, but there was mixed with them a kind of filial respect, which might lead to the supposition that there existed between them more intimate relations than was manifested to the eyes of the world. As for myself, I was in no wise comprehended in the marks of cordiality. The baron affected towards me from day to day haughtier manners, and without the protecting intervention of my great uncle, our antipathy would have led to some bitter scene, or even to violence.

The wife of baron Roderick of R—sitten, had produced on me, at first sight, an impression that contributed not a little towards making me support with patience the rudeness

of the master of the castle. Seraphine offered a delicious contrast by the side of her aged relatives, at whom I was tired of looking. Her beauty, enhanced by all the seductions of youth, had a stamp of surprising ideality. She appeared to me like an angel of light, more capable than all possible exorcisms to drive away forever all the evil spirits that haunted the castle. The first time that this adorable person addressed me, to ask how I amused myself in the mournful solitude of R—sitten, I was so struck with the charm of her voice and the celestial melancholy that dreamed in her eyes, that I could only answer her in monosyllables without connection, which must have made me appear to her eyes as the most timid or the most foolish of youths. The old aunts of the baroness, judging me of very little consequence, undertook to recommend me to the kindness of the young lady with looks so full of pride, that I could not refrain from paying them a few compliments that touched very nearly upon sarcasm. From that moment, in place of the pain that my position towards the baroness made me feel, I became aware that a burning passion animated my heart; and, however I might have been persuaded of the madness of such a sentiment, it was impossible for me to resist it; this became soon a kind of delirium, and during my long day dreams, I called to Seraphine with transports of despair. One fine night, my great uncle, suddenly awakened by my extravagant monologue, cried out to me from his bed,

“Cousin, cousin, are you losing your common sense? Be in love the whole day long, if that pleases thee; but there is a time for all things, and the night was made to sleep in!”

I trembled for fear that my uncle had heard the name of Seraphine escape from my lips, and that he would lecture me; but his conduct in this circumstance was filled with reserve and discretion; for the following day, as we were entering the hall, where every body had met for judicial trial, he said in a loud voice,

“May it please God that each one here knows how to watch over himself prudently!”

Then as I was taking my place at the desk by his side, he leaned towards me to add,

“Cousin, try to write without trembling, in order that I may be able to decipher, without wearing my eyes, thy judicial scribbling.”

The place of my great uncle at the table, was every day on the right of the beautiful baroness, and this favor made many jealous. I slid myself in here and there according to occurrences, among the other guests, who were composed frequently of officers of the neighboring garrison, with whom it was necessary to keep pace in drinking and talking. One day chance carried me near Seraphine, from whom I had been kept at a great distance. I had just offered my arm to her lady companion to go into the dining room : and when we turned around to salute each other, I noticed with a tremor that I was quite near the baroness. A sweet look welcomed me to my seat ; and whilst the repast lasted, instead of eating, I did nothing but sustain a conversation with her lady companion, in which all that I found to say, tenderly and delicately, was addressed directly to the baroness, from whom I did not remove my eyes. After supper, Seraphine, in doing the honors of the hostess, approached towards me, and asked me graciously, as at first, if I amused myself at the castle. I answered as well as I could, that at first, this wild domain had offered me a pretty painful residence, but that, since the arrival of the baron, this sad aspect had changed very much, and that if I had a wish to express, it would be only that I might be excused from following the chase.

“But,” said the baroness, “have I not heard that you were a musician, and that you composed verses ? I love the art passionately, and I play pretty well on the harp ; but that is a pleasure of which I must deprive myself here, for my husband detests music.”

I hastened to reply, that the baroness could easily procure for herself, during the long hunts of her husband, the pleasure of making a little music. It must be impossible that there

could not be found amongst the furniture of the castle some harpsichord. Miss Adelheid, the lady companion, in vain cried out and swore that, in the memory of man, nothing had been heard of at R—sitten, but the notes of the horn and the howling of packs. I was strong for succeeding in my project, when we saw Franz passing by.

“Truly,” exclaimed Miss Adelheid, “he is the only man I know that is capable of giving good advice in the most embarrassing cases ; and I defy you to make him pronounce the word *impossible*.”

We called Franz. The good man, after turning his hat in his hands for some time, ended by remembering that the wife of the steward, who lived in the neighboring village, possessed a harpsichord, on which she formerly accompanied her singing with so pathetic an accent, that in listening to her every one wept, as if they had rubbed their eyes with onion peels.

“A harpsichord ! we will have a harpsichord,” exclaimed Miss Adelheid.

“Yes,” said Franz, “but a little misfortune has happened to it ; the organist of the village, having wished to try on it the air of a hymn of his own invention, dislocated the machine whilst playing.”

“What a misfortune !” exclaimed the baroness and Adelheid, both at once.

“So that,” continued Franz, “it has been necessary to carry the harpsichord to the neighboring city, to have it repaired.”

“But has it been brought back ?” interrupted Miss Adelheid, quickly.

“I do not doubt it, my gracious young lady,” replied Franz, “and the steward’s wife would be very much honored, very much pleased——”

At this moment the baron appeared, stopped before our group, and passed on, saying to his wife :—“Well, dear friend, old Franz is he still the man to give good advice ?”

The baroness was speechless ; Franz was immovable, his

arms hanging down by his sides. The old aunts came and led off Seraphine. Miss Adelheid followed them. As for me, I remained for a long time in the same spot, thinking of the good fortune which had procured for me so sweet an interview, and cursing baron Roderick, who appeared to me nothing but a brutal tyrant, unworthy of possessing this admirable woman. I believe that I should be still standing, had it not been for my great uncle, who was seeking me, and touched me on the shoulder, saying, in his friendly manner,

“Cousin, don’t show thyself so assiduous towards the baroness; leave this dangerous trade of sighing to be followed by madcaps who have nothing else to do.”

I went into a long discourse to prove to my great uncle that I had allowed nothing to myself but what was admissable; but he shrugged his shoulders, went and put on his dressing gown, filled his pipe, and commenced talking about the hunt of the previous day.

That evening, there was a ball at the castle. Miss Adelheid had retained a whole orchestra of travelling musicians. My great uncle, very fond of his rest, had retired to his bed at his accustomed hour. My youth and my love made me worship this opportunity of an unexpected ball. I had finished my toilet, when Franz came and knocked at my door, to announce to me that the harpsichord had arrived on a sledge, and that the baroness had immediately ordered it to be placed in her room, where she was waiting for me with her lady companion. Judge of the joyful surprise which pervaded all my senses. I was drunk with love and desire; I hastened to Seraphine’s room. Miss Adelheid was beside herself with joy; but the baroness, already dressed for the ball, was standing, in silence and in a melancholy attitude, near the case in which were reposing the notes that, in my quality of musician and poet, I was called to awaken.

“Theodore,” said she to me, calling me by my baptismal name, according to the custom in the North, “Theodore, here is the instrument that we expected: God will that you keep your promise well.”

I approached towards it immediately ; but hardly had I taken off the cover of the harpsichord, when several strings broke with violence ; those which remained were of such bad quality that their sounds produced a discord sufficient to annoy the strongest ears.

"It is without doubt that the organist wishes to try again," exclaimed Miss Adelheid, with a joyous burst of laughter. But Seraphine was no longer disposed to be gay.

"Fatality !" said she in a low voice : "I can never have any pleasure here."

On examining the box of the harpsichord, I luckily found in it another sett of strings. "We are saved !" exclaimed I immediately. "Patience and courage aid me ! the damage will soon be repaired." The baroness took hold and helped me with her pretty fingers, whilst Adelheid unrolled the strings, as I called them by the numbers on the key-board.

After twenty unsuccessful trials, our perseverance was crowned with a full success ; harmony is established again, as if by enchantment. A little more labor, and the instrument is in tune ! This zeal, this love of art that we had exercised in common, had made the distance that existed between us disappear. The beautiful baroness shared innocently with me the happiness of a success which promised to her pleasant distractions. The harpsichord had become a kind of electric bond between us ; my timidity, my awkwardness disappeared ; nothing remained but love, love which swallowed up my whole existence. I preluded on this dear instrument those tender symphonies, which paint with so much poetry the passions of the meridian countries. Seraphine, standing before me, listened to me with her whole soul ; I saw her eyes sparkle, I breathed the shudderings which agitated her bosom ; I felt her breath flying around me like the kiss of an angel, and my whole soul flew towards the skies ! Suddenly her physiognomy appeared to become inflamed, her lips murmured, in cadence, sounds long since lost to her memory ; a few escaped notes placed my fingers, without study or effort, on a known

melody, and the voice of Seraphine broke out like a crystal bell.

It was a luxury of divine poetry ; an ocean of harmony, in which my heart was lost in crying to God to call us to himself. When I came out of this ecstasy—

“ Thanks,” said Seraphine, “ thanks for this hour which I owe you, and which I shall never forget.”

With these words she held out her hand towards me ; I fell on my knees to kiss it. It seemed to that me under my lips her nerves had trembled. Meanwhile the ball called us, the baroness had disappeared. I do not know how I found myself again in my great uncle’s room ; but that evening he said to me in a severe tone, that he was not ignorant of my interview with the baroness.

“ But take care,” added he, “ take care, cousin, thou art running on thin ice which hides an abyss without bottom. May the devil take music, if it is only to serve to make thee commit folly, by troubling the peace of a young and romantic woman. Take care of thyself ; none are so near death as a sick man who thinks that he is well.”

“ But my uncle,” said I, with the intention of justifying myself, “ do you think me capable of seeking to take the heart of the baroness by surprise ? ”

“ Monkey that thou art,” exclaimed my great uncle, stamping with his foot : “ if I believed it for a minute, I would throw you out of the window ! ”

The arrival of the baron cut short this conversation, and for a long time the labor of justice did not leave me leisure to return to Seraphine. Meanwhile our intimacy was gradually renewed. Miss Adelheid was often charged with a secret message to me from her mistress, and we occupied the frequent absence of the baron in meetings around the harpsichord. The presence of the lady companion, whose character was trifling enough, prevented us from the least wandering towards sentiment. But I recognized, by certain signs, that Seraphine carried in her heart a fund of sadness that was slowly

undermining her life. One day she did not appear at dinner. The guests hastened to enquire of the baron if the sufferings of his wife caused him any serious uneasiness.

“ Oh, in no wise ! ” answered the baron. “ The piercing air of this country, joined to a cold which might be produced by an abuse of music, has caused this passing illness.”

Whilst saying this, the baron threw a side glance towards me, which signified much. Adelheid understood enough of it to cause her to blush. She did not raise her eyes, but for me her looks appeared to say, that for the future, it would be necessary to make use of some precaution, in order not to excite the jealousy of the baron, from whom we might expect some evil design. A great anxiety took possession of my mind ; I did not know what course to take ; the threatening look that the baron sullenly took, irritated me so much the more, for the reason that I had nothing to reproach myself with ; but I feared to expose Seraphine to undergo his anger.

Ought I to quit the castle ?—But to renounce the society of Seraphine, seemed to me a sacrifice beyond my strength. I learned that the whole company were going to the hunt after dinner. I announced to my great uncle my intention of joining them.

“ Very good,” said the old man to me ; “ that is an exercise proper for thee, and I immediately bequeath to thee my carbine and hunting knife.”

We started ; we were placed at a short distance from each other in the neighboring forest, to surround the wolves. The snow fell very fast, and when the day was declining, there came a fog that hid all objects at six paces distance. The cold overcame me ; and I sought for shelter in a hedge, and, after leaning my gun against a pine tree, I commenced dreaming of Seraphine.

Soon reports of guns followed each other from distance to distance : and, at ten feet from the place where I had taken shelter, an enormous wolf presented itself. I took aim at him,

and fired ; I missed him ; he sprang upon me, but my presence of mind did not abandon me ; I received the furious animal on the point of my hunting knife, and he plunged it into himself up to the hilt. One of the foresters ran towards me on hearing the noise of his howling ; the huntsmen gathered around us, and the baron sprang towards me.

“ You are wounded ? ” said he.

“ No sir,” answered I ; “ my hand was surer than my aim.”

It would be difficult to tell all the encomiums that were lavished upon me for this exploit. The baron insisted upon my leaning on his arm, to return to the castle. A forester carried my gun. These attentions, granted to me by the lord of R—sitten, touched me deeply. I judged of him from that time quite differently. He seemed to me to be a man of energy and courage. But at the same time I thought of Seraphine ; I felt that the distance between us was growing less. I conceived the boldest hopes. But when, in the evening, swelled with pride, I related my adventure to my great uncle, he laughed in my face, saying,

“ God shows his power by the hands of the weak.”

The hour of repose had long since sounded, when, passing along the gallery to go to my bed, I met a white figure, that carried a night lamp.

It was Adelheid :—“ Good evening,” said she, laughing ; “ beautiful wolf-hunter ! why do you run thus without a light, all alone, like a real spectre ? ”

At this word spectre, I trembled from head to foot, and I recalled the two first nights of my stay at the castle. Adelheid perceived the sudden emotion that agitated me.

“ Well ! ” exclaimed she, taking my hand, “ what is the matter with you ? you are cold as marble ; come, let me give you life and health. The baroness is waiting for you, she is dying of impatience.”

I allowed myself to be led away without resistance, but without joy ; I was under the empire of a fatal pre-occupation.

The baroness, on seeing us enter, took several steps towards me, uttering an exclamation which she did not finish, for she stopped suddenly, as if struck with an after-thought. I took her hand and kissed it ; she did not withdraw it, but she said to me :

“ Theodore, why did you go to the hunt ? The hand that creates such sweet accords, is it made to handle arms and commit murder ? ”

The sound of this adorable voice penetrated to my very soul ; a veil extended itself over my sight, and I do not know how it happened, that instead of going to my seat at the harpsichord, I found myself on the sofa, talking with Seraphine of my singular hunting adventure. When I had told her the conduct of her husband, which contrasted strongly with his accustomed stiffness, she interrupted me, saying in her most affectionate voice,

“ Do you not see, Theodore, that you are not yet acquainted with the baron ? it is only here that his character shows itself so hard. Every time he comes here, a fixed idea pursues him ; it is that this castle is going to become the theatre of some terrible calamity to our family and to his peace. He is convinced that an invisible enemy exercises in this domain a power, which sooner or later will commit an immense crime. They relate strange things of the founder of this entail, and I know myself that the castle holds a family secret ; it is a tradition frightfully true, that a phantom comes here often to assail the proprietor, and does not permit him to make in this enclosure but a very limited residence. Every time that I come here with my husband, I feel almost continual terror, and it is only to your art, dear Theodore, that I am indebted for a little consolation. So that I cannot manifest to you too much gratitude.”

Encouraged by this exchange of confidence, I related to Seraphine my own apprehensions. But as I hid from her the most frightful details, I saw her face become mortally pale, and I understood that it was better to reveal all to her,

than to leave her imagination to exalt itself beyond measure. When I began to speak of this mysterious claw which scratched the walled-up door,

“Yes, yes,” exclaimed Seraphine, “it is in that wall that is shut up the fatal mystery.”

And hiding her beautiful face in her hands, she fell into a profound meditation. It was only then that I observed that Adelheid had left us. I spoke no longer, and Seraphine was still silent. I made an effort to rise and go to the harpsichord. A few accords that I drew from it awoke the baroness from her inactivity ; she listened quietly to an air as sad as our souls, her eyes filled with tears. I kneeled before her, she leaned towards me, and our lips united in a celestial kiss ; then she disengaged herself from my embrace, arose, and, when she reached the door of the room, she turned round and said to me,

“Dear Theodore, your uncle is a worthy man, who seems to be the protector of this house ; tell him, I pray you, to pray for us every day, in order that it may please God to preserve us from all evil.”

At these words, the lady companion re-entered. I could not answer Seraphine ; I was too much moved to speak to her without forgetting the restraint which was imposed upon us. The baroness held out her hand to me.

“Good by,” said she, “good by, dear Theodore ; I shall long remember this evening.”

When I went back to my great uncle’s room, I found him asleep. My eyes were filled with tears ; the love that I had for Seraphine pressed upon my heart with a painful heaviness ; my sobs soon became so hurried and strong that the justice awoke.

“Cousin,” exclaimed he, “do you wish decidedly to become mad ? Do me the kindness to go to bed immediately !”

This prosy apostrophe brought me back disagreeably to real life ; but I had to obey. A few moments had hardly elapsed, when I heard coming and going, the doors opening and shut-

ting, and then steps in the gallery. They came and knocked at the door of our chamber. "Who is there?" asked I, in a loud and rude voice.

"Mr. V——," was the answer from without, "quick, get up!" It was the voice of old Franz.

"Is the castle on fire?" said I to myself. At the word fire, my great uncle, who awoke, jumped out of bed, and went to open the door.

"For God's sake, make haste," replied Franz, "the baron is asking for you; the baroness is dying!"

The poor servant was lividly pale. We had hardly lighted a lamp, when the voice of the baron was heard.

"Can I speak to you immediately, my dear V——?" said he.

"Devil!" said my great uncle, "who asked thee to dress thyself; what art thou about to do?"

"See her once more; tell her that I love her, and then die!" answered I in a low and broken voice.

"Oh! undoubtedly, I ought to have guessed it," replied the severe justice, shutting the door in my face, and putting the key into his pocket. Delirious with anger, I tried to break the lock; but, promptly reflecting on the consequences which such a scene would occasion, I resigned myself to await patiently the return of my great uncle, fully decided, nevertheless, to escape from him at all events, as soon as he returned. I heard him speaking to the baron, in the distance, with great vivacity; but I could not distinguish their words. My name was mixed up with it, and my anxiety became intolerable. Finally the baron went away; it seemed to me that some one had come precipitately to seek him. My great uncle came back, and appeared stupified at the delirious state in which he found me. "She is dead, then!" cried I, on seeing him. "I will go down, I will see her immediately, and, if you refuse me, I will blow out my brains before your eyes! My great uncle remained unmoved, and covering me with an icy look,

"Dost thou think, then," said he, "that thy life has the least value for me, if it pleases thee to stake it upon a miserable threat? What hast thou to do with the baron's wife? By what right wouldst thou go to place thyself in a funeral chamber, from which thy ridiculous conduct excludes thee more than ever?"

I fell crushed, annihilated, into a seat. My great uncle took pity on me.

"Now," continued he, "I wish you to know that the pretended illness of the baroness was nothing but a dream. Adelheid becomes distracted when there is a thunder-storm, and the old aunts, attracted by the noise, are fatiguing poor Seraphine with their care and their elixirs. It is nothing but a fainting fit, a nervous crisis, attributed by the baron to the effects of music. Now, then, since thou art, as I hope, sufficiently tranquillized, I am going, with thy permission, to smoke a good pipe; for all the gold in the world I would not shut my eyes again until daylight. Look thou, cousin," continued he, after a pause, and blowing out enormous clouds of smoke, "I advise thee not to take seriously the heroic figure that thou hast had put upon thee since thy adventure at the wolf-hunt. A poor little devil like thee is often exposed to many misunderstandings, when he has the vanity to quit his own sphere. I remember that at the time when I was attending the university, I had for a friend a young man of a character mild, peaceable, and always equal. A chance having thrown him into an affair of honor, he conducted himself with such vigor that everybody was astonished. Unfortunately this success and the admiration with which he was caressed, changed his character completely. From firm and serious as he ought to have remained, he became a quarrelsome man and a bully: briefly, one fine day he insulted a comrade for the miserable pleasure of boasting; but he was killed like a fly. I only relate this story to thee to kill time; but it might be that thou wouldst have occasion to profit by it. And with that, here is my pipe finished; the sky is still covered with darkness, but we shall yet have two hours to sleep."

At this moment the voice of Franz was heard. He came to bring us news of the sick lady.

"The baroness," said he, "has entirely recovered from her indisposition, which she attributes to an unpleasant dream."

At these words, I was about to utter an exclamation of happiness, but a look from my great uncle closed my mouth.

"It is well;" said he to Franz, "I was only waiting to hear that before taking a little repose, for at my age watchfulness is unwholesome. God preserve us until night is passed!"

Franz retired, and although the cocks were heard crowing in the neighboring village, the justice buried himself in the feathers.

On the morrow, very early, I crept down to ask Adelheid concerning the health of my dear Seraphine. But at the entrance of the apartment I found myself face to face with the baron; his piercing look measured me with all its haughtiness.

"What do you come to seek?" said he to me in a stifled voice. I concealed my emotion as well as I could, and taking courage, I announced pretty firmly, that I came from my uncle to inquire the state of the baroness.

"All goes well," replied the baron, coldly; "she has had a nervous attack, to which she is subject. She is now reposing; and I think that she will appear at table. Tell him that: Go."

The expression of the baron's face in making me this answer, revealed an impatience which made me judge him more uneasy than he wished to appear. I saluted him and was about retiring, when he took me by the arm, and said to me with a look that seemed blasting to me,

"I have something to say to you, young man."

The tone with which he said these words caused me to make very doubtful suppositions. I saw myself in the presence of an offended husband, who had guessed what was passing in my heart, and who was preparing to exact a rigor-

ous account. I was without arms, except a little pocket-knife artistically wrought, which my great uncle had presented to me. I felt it in my pocket at this trying moment, and all my assurance was fortified. I followed the baron, decided to sell my life dearly if matters became serious. Arrived at his chamber, the baron shut the door with care, walked several times back and forth, and, stopping before me, with his arms folded upon his breast,

“Young man,” continued he, “I have something to say to you.”

All my energy blazed up, and my answer was as follows: “I hope, baron, that what you have to speak to me about, will not require on my part any reparation.”

The baron looked at me as if he had not understood; then he looked down, and, with his hands behind him, recommenced his promenade. I saw him take the carbine and sound the charge. My blood boiled under the apprehension of danger, and I opened, in the bottom of my pocket, the little knife, stepping nearer to the baron to prevent his taking aim at me.

“Pretty arm,” said the baron, and he deposited the carbine in a corner. I knew not what face to put on the matter, when the baron, coming back towards me, put his hand on my shoulder and said,

“Theodore, I must appear very extraordinary to you this morning. I am really entirely upset by the anguish of the past night. The nervousness of my wife had nothing in it to make me uneasy; but there exists in this castle, I know not what evil genius, which makes me look upon all things in the most gloomy light; this is the first time that the baroness has been taken sick here, and you are the sole cause of it.”

“Truly,” said I calmly, “I cannot explain myself——”

“I wish,” interrupted the baron, “that the infernal harpsichord had been broken into a thousand pieces the day that it was brought to my house! But, after all, I ought to have watched, from the first day, over what was passing here. My

wife is so delicately organized, that the least excess of sensation might cause her death. I had brought her here with the hope that this rude climate, joined to the occupations of a rough and strong mode of life, would produce on her a fortunate reaction : but you have taken it upon yourself to enervate her the more with your languishing melodies. Her exalted imagination was predisposed and subject to any shock, when you dealt her a fatal blow, in relating before her, I know not what stupid ghost story. Your great uncle has told me all ; so you can deny nothing ; I only wish you to repeat to me yourself all that you pretend to have seen."

The turn that our conversation took, re-assured me sufficiently, to enable me to obey the orders of the baron. He only interrupted my very detailed narration by short exclamations, which he immediately restrained. When I came to the scene in which my great uncle had so powerfully conjured the invisible phantom, he raised his joined hands to heaven and exclaimed,

" Yes, that was truly the tutelary genius of the family ; and when God shall call back his soul, I wish that his remains may sleep with honor by the side of my ancestors ! "

Then, as I remained silent, he took my hand and added,

" Young man, it was you who caused unwittingly the illness of my wife ; from you must come her cure."

I felt the color come into my face at these words. The baron, who was observing me, smiled at my embarrassment, and continued in a tone which bordered upon irony,

" You are not called upon to attend a very sick person, and this is the service that I expect from you. The baroness is entirely under the influence of your music ; it would be cruel to suppress it. I authorize you then, to continue it, but I require you to change the style of the pieces that you execute before her. Make a gradual choice of sonatas more and more energetic ; mix skilfully the gay and the serious ; and then, above all, speak to her often of the apparition which you have related to her. She will gradually become familiar

with this idea, and will end by attaching no farther importance to it. You understand me well, do you not? I count on your exactness."

On finishing this species of instruction, the baron left me. I remained confounded to myself, judged as a being of so little consequence, that I was not even capable of awaking the jealousy of a man by my attentions to the most beautiful woman that it was possible to imagine. Now my heroic dream was broken, I fell to the level of the child who takes seriously in his amusements his gilt paper crown for real.

My great uncle, persuaded that I had been playing some trick, awaited my return with anxiety.

"From whence comest thou?" cried he, as I came in sight.

"I have just had," said I, quite disconcerted, "an interview with the baron."

"Alas!" said the worthy justice; "when I told thee that sooner or later it would end badly——"

The burst of laughter with which my great uncle accompanied this sally, proved clearly to me that on all sides I was turned into ridicule. I suffered violently, but I took good care not to allow it to be perceived; had I not the future open to revenge myself for the little that was granted to me? The baroness appeared at dinner, dressed in white, which color accorded with the paleness of her cheeks; her physiognomy breathed a melancholy milder than ever; I felt, at the sight of her, my heart melt in my breast; and besides, I felt against Seraphine herself, in despite of her divine beauty, something of the anger with which the baron had inspired me; it seemed to me that these two beings united together to mystify me; I thought I read, I know not what of ironical in the half veiled look of Seraphine, and all the graciousness of her former reception wounded me like an odious lie. I sought with extreme care to keep myself as far from her as possible, and I took my place between two soldiers, with whom I drank full glasses, and time after time. Towards the end of the meal, a servant presented me with a plate filled with sugar plums, and

whispered these words in my ear: "From Adelheid." I took the plate, and on the largest of the sweetmeats I read these words, traced on the sugared envelope, with the point of a knife: "and Seraphine!" An ardent flame immediately circulated in my veins. I threw a fugitive look at Adelheid; she made a sign to me which seemed to say:

"Drinker, you forget nothing but the health of Seraphine?"

I immediately carried my glass to my lips; I emptied it at a single draught, and, on replacing it on the table, I perceived that the beautiful baroness had done the same; we had drank at the same instant; and, when our glasses touched the table, our eyes met! A cloud passed over my eyes, and the remorse of my ingratitude wounded my heart. Seraphine loves me; I have no longer any right to doubt; my happiness will become madness. But one of the guests arose, and, according to the custom of the North, proposed to drink to the health of the mistress of the castle. I know not how much spite, at finding myself anticipated, disturbed my brain: I take my glass, I raise it; I remain immovable; it seemed to me in this moment of fascination, that I was about to fall at the feet of my mistress.

"Well! what are you doing, my dear friend?" said my nearest neighbor.

This single word broke the charm; my eyes were opened—but Seraphine had disappeared.

After the repast, my intoxication became so insupportable, that I had to go out of the castle, in spite of the hurricane which was blowing, and the snow which was falling thickly. I took to running through the furze, along the borders of the lake, crying out with all my force:—"See how the devil makes the foolish child dance, who wished to pluck the forbidden fruit in the garden of love!"

And I ran, I ran until I lost my breath; and God knows how far I should have gone in this way, if I had not heard my name called out in the woods by a known voice, that of the master forester of R—sitten.

“Hallo! my dear Theodore,” exclaimed this honest man, “where the devil do you come from to wet your feet in the snow, at the risk of catching a fatal cold? I have been looking for you everywhere, for the justice has been waiting for you at the castle two long hours.”

Recalled to the track of common sense by the remembrance of my great uncle, I followed, a little mechanically, the guide who had been sent to seek me.

On arriving, I found him gravely attending to his duties, in the audience hall. I counted on receiving a lecture; but the good man was very indulgent.

“Cousin,” said he to me, smilingly, “thou didst well to go out and cool thyself to-day, but be more reasonable for the future; thou art not of an age to permit thyself those little excesses.”

As I did not answer a word, and as, like a scholar caught in fault, I feigned an anxiety to set myself to work—

“Tell me then, in full,” continued my great uncle, “what passed between the baron and thee.”

I confessed all, without restriction.

“Very well,” interrupted my great uncle, when he had heard enough of it; “the baron confided to thee a famous mission! Luckily for him we go away to-morrow.”

At these words I thought that I should fall. But on the morrow the great uncle kept his word, and since then I have never seen Seraphine.

A few days after our return, the respectable justice was assailed by extremely violent attacks of the gout. His temper, on account of the sufferings that he endured, became suddenly morose and bitter; in spite of my care and the aid of medicine, the disease only grew worse.

One morning I was called to him in great haste; a crisis more painful than the others, nearly killed him; I found him lying on his bed; his hand held a crumpled letter, which he tightly pressed. I recognized the hand-writing of the steward of R—sitten; but my sorrow was so great that no curiosity was awakened in my mind; I trembled constantly, for

fear that I should see this dear old relation expire, whose true affection for myself I was well acquainted with. Finally, after many hours of anguish, life gained the ascendant, the pulse commenced to beat, and the robust organization of the old man tired out the attacks of death. Gradually the danger disappeared; but he remained many months confined, without hardly moving, on his suffering bed. His health was so destroyed by this shaking, that it was necessary for him to retire from the practice of the law. There was no longer any hope of my return to R—sitten. The poor sick man could bear with no other care than mine, and, when his pain left him a moment of respite, all his consolation was to talk with me, but he never spoke of our stay at R—sitten, and I dared not myself recall it to his remembrance. When, by force of devotion and assiduous watching, I succeeded in restoring my great uncle to comparative health, the remembrance of Seraphine awoke in my heart, surrounded by a more powerful charm than ever. One day that I opened by chance, a portfolio, which I had used during my stay at R—sitten, something white fell from it. It was a silk ribbon that tied together a lock of Seraphine's hair. On examining this token of remembrance, given by secret love, that fate had crushed at its birth, I noticed a reddish spot on the ribbon. Was it blood? and this blood, was it a prognostic of some tragical event? My imagination abandoned itself to the most fatal suppositions, without having any means to verify its fears or putting a stop to them.

Meanwhile, my great uncle gradually regained his strength with the fine weather. During a mild evening, I had taken him to walk under the odorous lindens in our garden. He was in a joyous humor.

“Cousin,” said he, “I feel myself exceedingly strong; but I do not deceive myself concerning the future; this return to health resembles the last vivid flashes of a lamp on the eve of going out. But, before going to sleep the last slumber, whose approach I feel with the calmness of a just

man, I have to acquit myself of a debt towards thee. Dost thou remember our stay at R—sitten ? ”

This unexpected question threw me into inexpressible confusion. The old man perceived it, and continued without giving me time to seek for an answer.

“ Cousin,” said he, “ thou wouldst have given thyself up without my aid, to a passion which might have plunged thee into an abyss of misfortune, if I had not withdrawn thee from R—sitten. There exists, concerning the master of that castle, a mysterious story, with which thy imprudence was near mixing thee. Now that the danger is past, listen to me ; I wish, before death separates us, to reveal to thee strange facts. Perhaps thou wilt find, some day, occasion to profit by it.”

And here is what the great uncle related to me, speaking of himself in the third person.

During a stormy night of 176—, the inhabitants of the manor of R—sitten were suddenly awakened by a shock like an earthquake. All the servants of this gloomy domain ran frightened through the rooms, to seek the cause of this event ; but they found no vestige of destruction. All had returned to the secular calm, in which reposed the ancient family residence of R—sitten. Meanwhile, the old majordomo, Daniel, having gone up alone to the knight’s hall, where baron Roderick, of R—sitten, retired every night after his labors in alchemy, to which he abandoned himself ardently, was seized with horror at the sight of a sorrowful spectacle. Between the door of Roderick’s room and the door of another apartment, was a third door conducting to the summit of the castle-keep, into a pavilion that the baron had constructed for his experiments. Daniel having opened this door, a gust of wind extinguished his lamp ; some bricks became detached from the wall, and fell into the gulf with a hoarse reverberation. Daniel fell upon his knees, exclaiming,

“ Merciful heaven ! our good master perished by a terrible death ! ”

A short time after the body of the unfortunate lord was brought back in the arms of his weeping servants. They clothed him in his richest vestments, and they exposed him to view on a bier, constructed in the middle of the knight's hall.

An examination of the place showed that the upper arch of the keep had caved in. The weight of the stones forming the key of the arch had crushed in the floor ; the beams carried down at the same time, had, under their weight, thrown down a part of the wall, and pierced like arrows the lower stories, so that on opening, in the darkness, the door of the great hall, you could not step into the tower, without falling into a hole more than a hundred feet deep.

The old baron Roderick had predicted the day of his death, and had announced it to Wolfgang, the eldest of his children, on whom fell the entail of R—sitten. This young lord, having received at Vienna the message of his father, started without delay to go to him. On his arrival he found his fears cruelly realized, and fell fainting by the side of the funeral couch.

“ My poor father ! ” exclaimed he, in a voice broken by sobs, after a long pause of inanition and silent despair ; “ my poor father ! the study of the mysteries of the world has not given thee the science of prolonging life.”

After the funeral of the old lord, the young baron had narrated to him the details of the ruin of the turret by Daniel ; and, as the major-domo asked for his orders for the reparation of it,

“ No, never,” said Wolfgang. “ What to me is this old residence, where my father consumed, in the study of magic, the treasures that I had a right to inherit some day ! I do not believe that the turret was destroyed by an ordinary accident. My father perished the victim of the explosion of his accursed crucibles, in which melted away my fortune. I will not give a florin to replace one stone of these ruins. I prefer finishing the villa that one of my ancestors has commenced in the valley.”

"But," said Daniel, "what will be the fate of the ancient and faithful followers, whose asylum this manor is? Shall they go and beg the bread of pity?"

"What is it to me!" replied the inheritor of the entail; "what have I to do with these old people. I shall give to each one a reward proportioned to the length of his services."

"Alas, alas!" exclaimed the major-domo, mournfully, "must I at my age be sent from this house, where I hoped that my bones would rest in peace!"

"Accursed dog," howled Wolfgang, his hand raised against Daniel; "damned hypocrite, dost thou expect any favor of me, and dost thou think to make me thy dupe, after having aided my father in his sorcery, which consumed gradually the best part of my inheritance; thou who excitedst in the heart of the old man all the extravagances of avarice! Ought I not, to reward thee worthily, kill thee?"

Great was, at these words, the fright of Daniel; he crawlingly threw himself at the feet of his new lord, who having no compassion upon him, knocked him down to the floor by a violent kick in the breast. The miserable major-domo uttered a stifled cry, like a wild beast wounded, and raised himself slowly, throwing a look full of hatred and vengeance towards his master, then went away without picking up a purse full of gold that baron Wolfgang had dropped, to pay for the ill treatment that had been inflicted upon his servant.

The first care of the new proprietor of R—sitten was to compute, with the assistance of his counsellor, the lawyer V——, my great uncle, the state of the revenues of the estate. This examination, finished with the most minute care, established in the mind of the lawyer that the old baron Roderick had not been able to spend the whole of the annual rent of his domain; and as they had found amongst his papers but very insignificant value in bills of exchange, it was manifest that the cash must have been secreted in some place, of which the major-domo, Daniel, confidant of the deceased, alone possessed the secret.

The baron Wolfgang narrated to his counsellor the violent scene in which he had struck Daniel, and showed some fear that, to revenge himself, he would not discover the hiding-place where reposed, probably, the ducats of the old lord. The counsellor, like a sensible man, and like a skilful lawyer who knows how to make people communicative in spite of themselves, told Wolfgang not to trouble himself, and declared that he would take it upon himself to interrogate Daniel. But his first essays were unsuccessful. To every question Daniel answered, with a satanic smile—"Good heavens! Master Justice, I have no desire to make a mystery concerning a few miserable crowns! You will find a goodly number in a closet belonging to the bed-chamber of my poor master. As for the remainder," added he with flashing glances, "you must go and seek for them under the ruins of the turret. I engage that there could be enough gold found there to purchase a province."

Conformably to his directions, the closet was searched in presence of Daniel. There was found a large iron trunk, full of pieces of gold and silver, with a folded parchment under the cover. They read there the following lines, written by the old baron's own hand :

"He who shall inherit, after my death, the castle of R—sitten, will find here one hundred and fifty thousand ducats, of which it is my last wish that he should make use to construct, at the western angle of this castle, in the place of the turret that he will find destroyed, a light-house, whose light should burn every night, to warn those who sail upon the lake."

This singular will was signed with the name and seal of Roderick, baron of R—sitten, and dated St. Michaels eve, 176—.

After having verified the account of the ducats, Wolfgang turned towards Daniel.

"Thou hast been," said he to him, "a faithful servant, and I regret the violence with which I have used thee unjustly.

To repay thee for it, I continue thee in thy office of major-domo. According to thy desire, thy bones shall rest in this castle ; if thou wishest gold, stoop and fill thy hands."

Daniel only answered the young baron by a hoarse groan. The justice trembled at the extraordinary sound of that voice, which appeared to sob in an infernal language—"I want none of thy gold—I want thy blood !"

Wolfgang, dazzled by the sight of the treasure which rolled before his eyes, had not observed the equivocal look of Daniel, when the latter, with the cowardliness of a whipped dog, bent down to kiss the hand of his lord, and thank him for his gracious goodness.

Wolfgang shut the coffer, the key of which he put into his pocket ; then he came out of the closet, saying to Daniel, with his face suddenly clouded—"Would it then be so difficult to recover the treasure buried under the ruins of the turret ?"

Daniel answered by shaking his head, and opened the door which led to the keep. But hardly was it open, when a whirlwind of cold air forced into the room a mass of snow, and from the abyss arose an owl, who made several turns back and forth, and flew away frightened, uttering mournful cries.

The baron advanced towards the edge of the gulf, and could not refrain from shuddering, in measuring with a look its black depths. The justice, fearing a vertigo, drew Wolfgang back, whilst Daniel hastened to shut the fatal door, saying in a piteous tone—"Alas, yes, down there are buried and broken the instruments of the great art of my honored master, articles of the highest value !"

"But," exclaimed the baron, "thou hast spoken of moneyed treasures, of considerable sums——"

"Oh," continued Daniel, "I only meant to say that the telescopes, the retorts, the quarter circles, the crucibles, had cost considerable sums. I know nothing more."

No other reply could be elicited from the major-domo.

Baron Wolfgang felt quite joyful in having at his disposition pretty large sums to meet the expense of the construction

of the new castle that he wished to finish. Architects of renown were called to R—sitten, to draw up plans for him to choose from; but the lord of the domain, not being able to decide upon any of those that were presented to him, decided upon drawing himself the sketch of the elegant habitation which he wished to erect for himself; and, for the rest, he spared no expense to pay liberally all the workmen that he employed.

Daniel appeared to have forgotten his feelings against Wolfgang, and acted towards the baron with a reserve full of respect.

A short time after these events, the peaceful life of the inhabitants of R—sitten was troubled by the arrival of a new personage, Hubert, the younger brother of Wolfgang. This unexpected visit produced on the inheritor of the castle a singular impression. He repulsed the embraces of his brother, and drew him violently into a distant room, where they remained shut up for several hours. At the end of this long interview, Hubert came out with a look of consternation, and asked for his horse;—but when he was about to depart, lawyer V——, thinking that this meeting would establish again, forever, harmony between two brothers, too long separated by family dissensions, begged Hubert to remain for a few hours longer at the castle: and, at the same time, baron Wolfgang arriving, joined his entreaties to those of the justice, saying to his brother,

“I hope that before long thou wilt reflect.”

These words calmed, apparently, the agitation of Hubert; he decided upon remaining. Towards evening, my great uncle went up to Wolfgang's study, to consult with him concerning a detail of the administration of the affairs of the castle. He found him a prey to a violent anxiety, and walking the room hurriedly, like a man pre-occupied with a fixed and painful idea.

“My brother has just arrived,” said Wolfgang, “and I have found in him, at first, evidences of that family aversion

which has separated us for so many years. Hubert hates me because I am rich, and because he has spent, like a true prodigal, the greater part of his fortune. He comes to me with the most hostile disposition, as if I ought to become responsible for his folly. I cannot and will not dispossess myself of the smallest part of the revenues of my inheritance. But, like a good brother, I would consent to abandon to him a half that belongs to me, of a vast domain, that our father possessed in Courland. This sacrifice, on my part, would place Hubert in a position to pay the debts that he has contracted, and to withdraw from annoyance his wife and children, who are suffering now the consequences of his improvidence and misconduct. But, figure to yourself, my dear V——, that this prodigal madman has discovered, I know not by what sorcery, the existence in my hands of the coffer which contains the hundred and fifty thousand ducats, that we found in the vault. He pretends that he can force me to give up to him a half of this sum! But may the lightning strike me before I consent to it; and if he meditates any evil trick against me, God preserve me, and make his attempts unsuccessful.”

The justice forgot nothing that would make Wolfgang look upon the visit of his brother in a less odious light. Charged by the baron with the negotiation of a transaction with Hubert, he acquitted himself of this confidential mission with infinite zeal. Hubert, pressed by a very active need of money, accepted the offers of Wolfgang with two conditions: the first, that Wolfgang should add to his part of the inheritance a present of four thousand ducats, which should be employed to calm the pursuit of the most pressing among his creditors; the second, that he should be permitted to pass several days at R—sitten, near his beloved brother.

To this demand Wolfgang loudly exclaimed, that he could never subscribe, his wife being on the point of arriving. For the rest, he counted out to Hubert two thousand pieces of gold, as a gift.

On listening to the message of the justice, Hubert knit his brows :—" I will reflect upon it," said he ; " but meanwhile, I am installed here, and I will not stir."

The justice exhausted himself in vain efforts to dissuade him from his resistance to the desires of the baron. Hubert could not tranquilly resign himself to seeing the inheritance in the hands of a brother, privileged by right of age. This law appeared to him supremely unjust and wounding. The generosity of Wolfgang appeared to him more difficult to support than an injury.

" So then," exclaimed he, " my brother treats me like a beggar ! I will never forget it, and soon, I hope, he will appreciate the consequences of his proceedings as regards me.

Hubert installed himself, as he had announced, in one of the wings of the old castle. He passed his days in hunting, and often Daniel accompanied him ; he was, besides, the only one of the inhabitants of the manor whose association appeared to agree with him. He lived, for the rest, in almost absolute solitude, avoiding, above all things, a meeting with his brother. The justice did not remain long without conceiving some suspicion, and without manifesting a certain distrust, in regard to Hubert and his mysterious life. One morning, Hubert entered his office, and announced that he had changed his opinion, that he was ready to quit R—sitten, provided that he counted out to him on the spot, the two thousand pieces of gold agreed upon.

" His departure," said he, " was fixed for the next night ; and as he wished to travel on horseback, he asked that the sum might be given to him in a letter of credit, on the banker Isaac Lazarus, of the city of K., where it was his intention to establish himself.

This news caused ineffable joy in the heart of Wolfgang.

" My dear brother," said he, whilst signing the letters of credit, " has at last renounced his angry disposition towards me ! Good harmony is forever re-established between us, or at least he will no longer sadden, by his presence, the occupation of this castle."

In the middle of the following night, the justice V—— was suddenly awakened by a lamentable groan. He arose in bed and listened ; but all had become silence again, and V—— imagined that he had had a bad dream : he left his bed and went to the window to calm his mind by breathing the cool night air. Hardly had he remained a few minutes leaning on the window-sill, than he saw the castle door open, creaking on its rusty hinges. Daniel, the major-domo, armed with a dark lantern, took from the stable a saddled horse, which he led into the yard ; then another man, enveloped to the eyes in a furred cloak, came out of the castle ; it was Hubert, who conversed several minutes with the major-domo, gesticulating animatedly, after which he re-entered the castle. Daniel conducted the horse back to the stable, shut it, also the door of the castle, and retired noiselessly. The justice made all kinds of conjectures concerning this failure to depart. He asked himself for what motive Hubert could have changed his mind ; did there not exist between him and Daniel some understanding to produce an evil, that the future alone would make known ? All possible suppositions were equally dangerous and painful ; great sagacity and an indefatigable surveillance was necessary to thwart the evil projects that these two men could nourish between them, the last of whom above all, master Daniel, was already covered, in the eyes of the justice, with a coating of ineffacable wickedness. V—— passed the remainder of the night in the midst of singular reflections, which were something less than re-assuring. At day break, as he was about to go to sleep again, he heard a great noise of confused voices, and people who were running about in every direction ; soon several distracted servants came and knocked at his door, and announced to him that the baron Wolfgang had disappeared, without their being able to tell what had become of him. He had retired the night before at his usual hour, then he must have gone out in his night dress with a light, for these articles were no longer to be found in his chamber, in the place where they were the night before.

Struck with a sudden idea, which caused him the most cruel anguish, the justice V—— recollected the fact, of which he was rendered the involuntary witness the past night. He also recollected the mournful cry that he had heard. His heart a prey to the most fatal apprehensions, he ran to the knight's hall; the door which communicated with the keep was open! The justice pointed with his finger to the abyss of the tower, and said to the servants, chilled with fright,

“It is there that your unfortunate master has found death this night!”

And in fact, through a thick coating of snow, which had drifted during the night, on the ruins, was seen an arm stiffened by death, half extended from amongst the stones. Several hours were required, and at the risk of the greatest danger, to recover, by means of ladders fastened together, the body of baron Wolfgang. One of his hands starkly held the lamp which had served to light him; all his limbs were horribly dislocated in his fall, and torn by the angles of the rocks.

Hubert was amongst the first to make his appearance, offering on his face all the signs of a true despair. The body of Wolfgang was laid on a large table, in the same place, where a short time before they had placed that of the old baron Roderick. Hubert threw himself on the body weepingly.

“Brother,” exclaimed he, “I did not ask this fatal vengeance of the demons who possessed me!”

The justice, who was present, did not understand what these mysterious words could signify, but a secret instinct which he could not repress, pointed Hubert out to him as the murderer, through jealousy of the title to the entail. A few hours after this painful scene, Hubert came to seek him in the council chamber. He seated himself, pale and unnerved, in an oak arm chair, and spoke in a voice, made tremulous by emotion,

“I was,” said he, “the enemy of my brother, on account of that absurd law which enriches the eldest of a family to the disadvantage of the other children. A frightful misfor-

tune has ended his days. I wish that this may not be a chastisement from heaven for the hardness of his heart. I am now the inheritor of the entail ; God knows how much this change of fortune afflicts my heart ; all happiness in this world has fled from me. As for yourself, sir, I confirm you fully in the charges and powers that were confided to you during the lifetime of my father and my brother ; rule this domain according to your views, for my best interest. As for myself, I am about to leave this castle ; I cannot live a single day longer amongst the scenes where such frightful events have taken place.”

With these words, Hubert arose and left the apartment. Two hours afterwards he was galloping his horse towards K——.

Meanwhile they were busy making inquiries concerning the cause of the death of the unfortunate baron. The common opinion was that he had arisen during the night, to seek for some book in the library. Deceived by his half slumbering condition, he mistook the door, and had opened the middle one, which opened on the abyss. This explanation was not wholly satisfactory ; the door leading to the turret must have been usually bolted with great care, and time and strength were necessary to open it. How then imagine that the young baron could have been the victim of such an error ? The justice lost himself in reflections, when Franz, the favorite servant of Wolfgang, who listened to him as he was talking to himself, interrupted him to say,

“Ah ! it was not thus, that his misfortune happened ! ”

But all the questions with which he was urged, could not draw from him the least explanation in presence of witnesses. He declared that he would only speak to the justice, and under promise of secrecy. He afterwards related, in a mysterious conversation, that the departed often spoke of treasures that he supposed were buried up under the ruins of the turret ; that he had taken the key of the door from Daniel, and that often, in the middle of the night, he went and crouched over

the gulf, to dream at leisure of the immense riches that his love of gold led him to imagine were buried up in this abyss. It was probable that during one of these perigrinations, he had been attacked with a dizziness, and fallen. Daniel, who appeared to feel, more sensibly than any other person, the horror of this accident, proposed to have the door walled-up, and his suggestion was immediately followed.

Hubert, invested with the title, returned to the province of Courland, leaving to justice V—— the necessary power for managing for him the domain of R——sitten. The project for the construction of a new castle was abandoned, and they solely occupied themselves in propping up the ruins of the old one.

Several years after these events, Hubert re-appeared one day at R——sitten : it was at the beginning of autumn. During the short stay that he made at the castle, he had frequent secret interviews with the justice, spoke of his approaching death, and announced that he had deposited his will in the hands of the magistrates of the city of K——. His presentiments were justified : he died the next year. His son, who bore his name, went immediately to R——sitten, to take possession of his inheritance ; his mother and sisters were his companions. The young lord appeared to be inclined to all the vices. On his arrival at R——sitten, he drew upon himself the hatred of all his companions in the manor : the first act of his will was about to turn everything in the domain upside down, when the justice declared that he formally opposed the orders given by this young madman, until after the will of his father was read, which could alone confer upon him in a reasonable manner the rights that he so arrogantly assumed.

The unexpected resistance on the part of a man who was nothing in his eyes but an upper servant, transported the young lord with anger. But the justice knew how to hold his own against the storm, and maintained courageously the inviolability of his functions. He went so far as to order young Hubert to leave R——sitten until the day fixed for the

reading of the will. Three months from that time, the parchments were opened at K——, in the presence of the magistrates of the city. Besides the witnesses necessary to this reading, justice V—— had brought a good looking young man, but simply dressed, and who might have been taken for his secretary. The future possessor of the title presented himself arrogantly, and claimed the immediate reading of the will, not having, as he said, much time to lose in foolish formalities.

The deceased baron Hubert of R——sitten declared that he had never possessed the title as the real inheritor, but that he had managed for the interest of the only son of his brother Wolfgang of R——sitten. This child bore, like his grandfather, the name of Roderick; he alone could be the legitimate heir to the title. The will related, besides, that the baron Wolfgang, in his travels, had been united at Geneva, by a secret marriage, with a young lady of noble family, but without fortune. His wife, at the end of a year, had left him a widower with a son, whose rights of birth no one could contest, and who found himself thus called to inherit the title. Finally, to explain his perpetual silence during his lifetime on the subject of this revelation, Hubert declared that a private agreement between Wolfgang and himself, had made this silence a sacred obligation.

The reading of the articles of the will being ended, the justice V—— arose and presented to the magistrates the young unknown that he had brought with him.

“Gentlemen,” said he, “this is the baron Roderick of R——, legitimate son of Wolfgang of R——, and lord by right of the inheritance and title of R——sitten.”

Hubert, hearing these words, appeared annihilated as if stunned by a thunder clap; then recovering himself by a kind of convulsion, he stretched out his hand like a threat against the young man who thus suddenly stood between him and his fortune, and sprang out of the hall with all the signs of a furious delirium.

Meanwhile, by order of the magistrates, Roderick drew from his pockets the writings that established, indubitably, his identity; he also placed before their eyes the letters of his father to his mother. But, in the papers, Wolfgang had taken the standing of merchant, and the name of DeBorn; and his letters, although the resemblance of the hand-writing was evident, only bore for signature the initial W——. The judges were very much embarrassed to decide this grave question, and separated, to proceed to a vigorous study of the facts that had been submitted to them. Hubert, informed of what was passing, immediately addressed a request to the regent of the district, to be put into immediate possession of the inheritance, in default of sufficient proofs in favor of his adversary. The tribunal decided that it should be done as the baron Hubert of R——sitten solicited, if young Roderick did not, without delay, furnish undoubted evidence of the legitimacy of his claims.

Justice V—— gathered carefully all the papers left by Wolfgang of R——; he was once, towards midnight, in the bed-chamber of the deceased, at R——sitten, buried to the eyes in dust and old files of papers; the moon shone from outside with a sinister light, whose reflections furrowed the walls of the neighboring hall, of which the door was open. Suddenly the justice was drawn from his labor by a noise of footsteps that proceeded from the stairway, and by the jingling of a bunch of keys. He rose and went into the hall, listening attentively. A door opened, and a man partly dressed, carrying a dark lantern, entered staggeringly, his face pale and distorted. V—— recognized Daniel; he was about speaking to him, when on examining the features of the old major-domo, he perceived that he was suffering an attack of somnambulism, for he was walking with his eyes closed,—directed himself towards the walled-up door, placed his lantern on the floor, drew a key from the bunch hanging at his girdle, and began to scratch at the door, uttering hoarse groans. A few minutes after he placed his ear to the wall, as if to listen to

some noise, and with an imperative gesture seemed to impose silence on some one. Finally, after all these mysterious demonstrations, he stooped, took up his lantern, and returned by the same way that he had come. The justice followed him carefully. Daniel descended, went to the stable, saddled a horse, conducted him to the court yard, and after having remained a short time with his head bent, in the posture of a servant who is receiving the orders of his master, he put the horse back into the stable, and went back to his chamber, of which he took care to bolt the door. This strange scene gave birth in the mind of the justice, to the idea that a crime had been committed, in the castle, and that Daniel had been either the accomplice or the witness of it.

The following day, towards dark, Daniel having presented himself in his room to perform certain details of his duty, the justice took him by both hands, and made him sit down in an arm-chair opposite to him.

"Tell me, now," said he to him, "my old Daniel, what you think of the disagreeable suit now pending between Hubert and young Roderick?"

"Ahem, ahem! what is it to me which of them shall be master here?" answered Daniel, winking his eyes and lowering his voice, as if he was afraid of being heard.

"What is the matter with you, Daniel?" continued the justice, "you tremble all over as if you had committed a crime. It would be said, on seeing you, that you had just passed a very restless night."

Daniel, instead of answering, arose heavily, and tried to go out of the room, throwing an unmeaning look around him. But the justice, forcing him into his chair again, said to him harshly,

"Stay, Daniel, and tell me immediately what you did last night: or rather explain to me what I saw?"

"Well, in God's name, what did you see?" said the old man, shudderingly.

The justice related the nocturnal scene that I have just

described. Whilst listening to him the old major-domo, stupefied, sank back into the great chair, and covered his face with his hands, to hide himself from the penetrating look that interrogated him.

"It appears, Daniel," continued the justice, "that the desire takes you, during the night, to go and visit the treasures that the old baron Roderick had amassed in the turret. In their attacks, somnambulists answer, without equivocation, to the questions that are put to them; the next night we will speak of certain things."

As the justice spoke, Daniel was troubled; at the last words uttered by V——, he cried out loudly, and fell fainting. Some servants were called, and carried him immediately to his bed, insensible. He passed from this crisis to a state of complete lethargy, which lasted several hours. On awaking, he asked for drink, then sent away the servant, who was watching with him, and shut himself up in his room.

The following night, as the justice was thinking of making a decisive trial on Daniel, he heard a noise without, as if several panes of glass were being broke. He ran to the window: a thick vapor was issuing from the room occupied by Daniel, of which they had forced the door to save it from the fire. The old major-domo was found in a fainting fit on the floor. His broken lantern by his side, had communicated the fire to the bed curtains, and without the prompt aid which was rendered to him, he would have perished miserably. It had been necessary, in order to reach him, to break down the door, fastened by two enormous bolts. The justice understood that Daniel wished to make it impossible for him to get out of his room, but the blind instinct which directs somnambulists had been stronger than his will. He had awoke in the midst of the crisis, on finding an unaccustomed resistance; his lantern had fallen from his hand, had set fire, and the fright had made him lose the use of his senses. Come to himself, Daniel had a long and serious illness, from which he arose only to drag himself about in a frightfully languid condition.

One evening that the justice, constantly occupied in seeking the proofs which established the rights of Roderick, his protégé, was searching once more the archives of R—sitten, Daniel entered the room, walking with measured steps, like a spectre. He went directly towards the desk of the justice, on which he laid a portfolio of black leather; then he fell upon his knees, exclaiming:

“There is a Judge in heaven! I wished to have time to repent!”

Then he arose and went out of the chamber slowly, as he had come.

The black portfolio contained precious papers, all written by the hand of Wolfgang, and sealed with his seal. These papers established clearly the legitimacy of his son, and contained the history of his secret marriage. These proofs became indisputable. Hubert was obliged to recognize them when they were presented to him, and he declared before the judges that he desisted from all claims to the inheritance of his uncle Wolfgang of R—sitten. After this move he quitted the city and the country. It was known that he went to St. Petersburg, where he served in the Russian army, and had been sent to Persia. His mother and sister occupied themselves, after his departure, with putting in order the affairs of their domain in Courland. Roderick, violently smitten with the charms of Hubert's sister, followed these ladies to their homes, and the justice V—— having returned to K——, the castle of R—sitten became again more gloomy and deserted than ever.

Since the scene of the black portfolio, Daniel had become so ill, that it had been necessary to bestow his office upon another major-domo. Franz was invested with this employment, which was a just recompense for his faithful service. A short time after, all the judicial affairs relative to the entail were completely elucidated; the legal formalities were fulfilled by the care of justice V——, who gave himself no rest until he had seen the young Roderick installed securely, and sheltered from all

further fears. But a short time elapsed before he had heard that Hubert, his competitor, had perished in a battle against the Persians ; so that his property in Courland passed into the hands of the beautiful Seraphine, his sister, who reciprocated the love of Roderick, and who was soon united to him by the bonds of marriage. The wedding took place at R—sitten at the commencement of the month of November, and nothing was spared to give to this ceremony all the splendor which the high rank and riches of the parties required. The justice V——, who had looked upon himself for a number of years as inseparable from the lord of R—sitten, had chosen for his domicile at the castle, the old sleeping room of the ancient Roderick, in order, thought he, to be thus more able to spy into the secrets of the conduct of Daniel. One evening that the baron and his lawyer, seated in this chamber, one at each end of a table, placed before an enormous fire, were busy examining the condition of the revenues of the domain, the blast roared outside with great fury ; the fir trees in the forest cracked like giant skeletons, and the howling of the wind, like sobs, pervaded the galleries.

“ What frightful weather out there, and how comfortable it is here ! ” exclaimed V——.

“ Yes, yes, frightful,” repeated Roderick, mechanically, whom nothing had been able to abstract from his calculations until then. He arose to go to the window to observe the effect of the tempest : but hardly was he up, than he fell back into his chair, his mouth open, his look fixed, his hand extended towards the door which had just opened, to give entrance to a livid and fleshless figure, whose aspect would have inspired the bravest with terror. It was Daniel !

Paler than Daniel, and agitated by a feverish impatience on seeing the old major-domo scratch at the walled-up door, the baron Roderick sprang towards him, crying out :

“ Daniel, Daniel ! what doest thou here at this hour ? ”

Daniel uttered a groan and fell backwards. They tried to raise him, the unfortunate man was dead.

“Great God !” exclaimed Roderick, clasping his hands, “what a crime a moment of fear has made me commit ! this man was a somnambulist, and the physicians, do they not say that it is sufficient to call a man by his name, when he is in his fits of hallucination, to kill him suddenly ?”

“Baron,” said the justice, gravely, “do not accuse yourself of the punishment of this man who has just died, for he was the murderer of your father !”

“Of my father ?”

“Yes, my lord ; it was the hand of God which struck him when you spoke ; the terror which seized upon you, is the instinct of odious repulsion, which takes possession of us at the aspect, at the touch of a scoundrel. The words that you spoke to Daniel, and which killed him like a clap of thunder, are the last that your unfortunate father pronounced.”

The justice, taking then from his pocket a writing carefully sealed, which was wholly from the hand of Hubert, brother of Wolfgang of R—sitten, he set himself about unveiling to the eyes of Roderick, the mysteries of hate and vengeance which had already drawn so many misfortunes upon the family of R—sitten. He read a kind of autograph confession, in which Hubert, (the one who had just died in Persia,) declared that his animosity against his brother Wolfgang, dated from the institution of the entail of R—sitten. This act of the will of their father which deprived him, Hubert, of the best part of his fortune for the advantage of his elder brother, had left in his heart the germs of a resentment which nothing could destroy. Since that epoch, Hubert, yielding to an irresistible desire for vengeance, had concerted with Daniel the most effectual means to create a misunderstanding between Wolfgang and the old baron Roderick. The old man wished to render more illustrious the new title of the alliance of his eldest son with one of the oldest families in the country. His astrological observations had even made him read in the starry heavens the certainty of this union ; so that any choice that Wolfgang could have made against his

will, would have become for him a cause of mortal grief and malediction. Wolfgang, suddenly taken with a violent passion for a young girl of noble lineage, but entirely without fortune, had flattered himself with leading, by force of time and care, his old father to approve the marriage that he had contracted secretly with the woman whom he adored.

Meanwhile the old baron, having found in the constellations the prediction of his approaching death, had written to Geneva to order Wolfgang to come to him immediately. But when he arrived, his father was dead, as we have seen at the commencement of this story. A little later, when Hubert came to R—sitten, to settle with his brother the affairs of the succession, Wolfgang frankly told him the mystery of his marriage, expressing his joy at having been blessed with a son, and with being able soon to discover to his beloved wife, that the merchant DeBorn, to whom she had united her fate, was the rich and powerful heir of the barons of R—sitten. He confided to him, at the same time, his project of returning to Geneva, to bring back the baroness Seraphine of R—. But death surprised him at the moment he was about to set out. Hubert profited by his death, to assure his direct succession to the inheritance, since nothing established the rights of the son of Wolfgang. Nevertheless, as he had in him a fund of loyalty, remorse was not long in taking possession of his mind. An accident which he looked upon as providential, awoke in him the fear of heavenly punishment. He had two children already eleven or twelve years of age, who gave continual proofs of misunderstanding. One day, the eldest of these two children said to the other,

“Thou art nothing but a miserable fellow; I shall be some day the lord of R—sitten, and then it will be necessary, my dear youngster, to come humbly to ask me for enough to buy a new doublet.”

The younger, irritated by this pleasantry, struck his brother a blow with his knife, the consequences of which were fatal. Hubert, frightened by this misfortune, sent his remaining son

to Petersburg, where he was placed in a regiment, under the command of Suvarow. The grief which troubled him made him reflect seriously. He collected, with religious care, the rents of the estate, and sent to Geneva, under the fictitious name of a relation of the merchant DeBorn, abundant pecuniary aid, to provide for the maintenance of the young son of Wolfgang. As to the death of Wolfgang, it long remained a frightful mystery, that the madness of Daniel gave hardly a glimpse of. Here is the explanation given by the confession of Hubert.

On the night of his departure, Daniel, who doubtlessly wished to profit by the animosity which existed between the two brothers, retained him as he was mounting his horse, by saying that he ought not to abandon thus a magnificent inheritance to the avarice of Wolfgang.

“ Well ! what can I do about it ? ” exclaimed Hubert, angrily, striking his forehead ; then he had added, making a menacing gesture with his carbine—“ ah ! why have I not been able, in the confusion of a hunt, to find the opportunity to send the sure lead ! ”

“ Fortunate are you not to have committed this imprudence ! ” continued Daniel, pressing his arm. “ But would you be decided upon taking possession of this domain, if you had not the responsibility of the means ? ”

“ Yes, at any price, ” hoarsely murmured the savage Hubert.

“ Remain then here, from this time, ” said Daniel : you are in your own house, baron of R—sitten ; for the former lord of the castle is dead, crushed this night under the ruins of the turret ! ”

This is the manner in which this fatal drama was accomplished ; Daniel, who was pursuing his project of appropriating a good sum of money, without counting the presents of the new baron, had observed that Wolfgang came every night to meditate on the edge of the abyss, that had been hollowed out by the fall of the key-stone to the vault of the turret. One night then, after being acquainted with the approaching

departure of Hubert, he went and posted himself in an obscure angle of the knight's hall, to wait until Wolfgang appeared at the accustomed hour ; and when the unfortunate baron had opened the door of the tower, he had pushed him by the shoulders into the gulf. His sordid avarice thus touched the realization of his hopes, and his hate was satiated with vengeance.

Cruelly moved by these horrible revelations, baron Roderick could no longer live in this castle, over which hung a bloody veil. He returned to his estates in Courland, from whence he came no more to R—sitten, except in the hunting season.

Franz, the new major-domo, related, during my stay at R—sitten, that from time to time, during the nights lighted by the full moon, the shade of Daniel was perceived wandering through the galleries and large halls of the manor.

Such was the recital given to me by my great uncle, the justice. I risked then timidly a question concerning Seraphine.

“Cousin,” said the good old man to me in a trembling voice, “the cruel destiny which struck the family of R—sitten did not spare this poor young woman. Two days after our departure, she was tumbled down among the rocks in a sledging party ; her skull was fractured. The baron is inconsolable for his loss. Cousin, we shall never return to R—sitten. At these words, the voice of my great-uncle was extinguished in tears. I left him with a lacerated heart.

Many years after these events, the justice had long slept in the tomb. The war of Napoleon ravaged the North, and I was returning from St. Petersburg along the sea coast. In passing near the little city of K——, I perceived at a great distance a starlike flame. As I approached it, I distinguished a very considerable blaze. I asked the postillion if it was a fire.

“No, sir,” answered he, “it is the light-house of R—sitten !”

The light-house of R—sitten ! this name awoke all the souvenirs of my heart. I saw in a pale halo my adored Ser-

aphine ! I drove to the village where the steward of the domain lived, I asked to see him.

“ Sir,” said a clerk in royal livery to me, taking out his pipe, “ there is no longer here any steward of the domain of R—sitten. It is a domain sequestered to the crown by the death of the last baron without heirs, deceased sixteen years ago.”

I went up to the manor ; it was in ruins. They had employed the best materials in the construction of a light-house on the rock. A peasant whom I met in the wood of fir trees told me, with a frightened look, that at the return of the full moon, was often seen white shadows pursuing each other among the ruins uttering mournful cries.

Sweet soul of my Seraphine, thou shalt not go into those desolate places ! God has recalled thee to Himself, to sing holy hymns among the angels !

*Die Jesuitenkirche in G. (Nachtstücke in
Callot's manner, I. Aufl. Hempel's ed.
Vol. II, p. 102 ff.)*

BERTHOLD, THE MADMAN.

AT the end of a long journey, jolted in an old coach, in which the worms found nothing more to eat, I arrived before the only inn of the borough of G——. This little locality was not without its charms, and I should have been pleased to make some stay there, had it not been for the annoyance forced upon me by a detention hurtful to my interests; for the unfortunate coach in question was so dilapidated that the curious people in G——, standing at their doors, cried in my ears, in an almost unanimous voice, that two or three days would hardly suffice to put my paltry equipage in a state to proceed. Do you understand, friend reader, the pleasure of a traveller stuck in the mud? As for myself, I was on that day in a terrible humor, when I recollected suddenly, by chance, of a certain person, concerning whom one of my friends had spoken to me some years before. This person was called Aloysius Walter; he was an educated man, of excellent reputation, professor of humanities in the Jesuit College at G——. I thought that to kill time, I could not do better than to pay a visit to the professor; but at the door of the college I learned that he was busy with his class in philosophy; it was necessary to come back at another time, or wait in the stranger's parlor. I waited. The gallery, in whose architecture I observed a mixed style of Roman and the reformed, did not offer to the eye the severe harmony of religious constructions. Portraits of the dignitaries of the Jesuit society,

clothed in their black robes, contrasted singularly with the Greek ornaments of the pillars and ceiling, where the decorator's had figured little flying angels, surrounded by garlands of flowers and baskets of fruit. When master Aloysius presented himself to me, I excused the indiscretion of my visit on account of the intimacy of my friend, whose name the Rev. father gladly welcomed. This Jesuit was an elegant talker, a priest without austere manners, and who must have seen wordly life more than once through the window of his convent. He conducted me into his cell, a coquettishly furnished room, which would not have been discreditable to one of our modern elegants, and as he guessed my surprise at the sight of these little elegances of agreeable existence, the taste for which had been able to slip into a place destined for the accomplishment of such grave duties, he hastened to take up the conversation.

"Sir," said he with a polished smile, "we have, as you see, banished from our houses the shadowy poetry of the Gothic style. The Gothic applied to a religious edifice, saddens the soul with mysterious terrors, instead of raising it to hope; God, who has made nature so beautiful and rich to the eye of man, wishes us to come to him by paths of love, instead of bowing himself under the arid vaults of these forests of stone and iron which represent the cathedrals of the north.

If the true country of man is in heaven, and God has strewn the sky with marvels of his power, why should it not be permitted us to enjoy, whilst passing along, the flowers which spring here and there in the paths of our valley of exile? As for the rest, do not imagine that this apparent richness of our houses can make us deserve an accusation of luxury and prodigality. Marble, in this country, would be enormously expensive; thus we have known how to content ourselves with clothing in stucco our humble stone walls, and it is the brush of the painter which often creates those varied marblings with which ignorant Puritanism becomes offended."

Whilst talking thus, father Aloysius had conducted me to the chapel, whose nave was supported by a magnificent colonade of the Corinthian order. On the left of the great altar arose a vast scaffolding, on which a painter was busy repairing frescoes painted in the old French style.

"Well, master Berthold," said Aloysius, "how goes on the work?"

The painter hardly turned to look at us, and recommenced his labor, murmuring, so as to be heard with difficulty.

"Bad work! confused lines—a mixed mass of figures of men, animals, monkeys, demons! Miserable madman that I am!"

The plaintive accent with which the painter dropped these words made my heart ache: I saw before me, doubtlessly, a poor unknown artist, whose talent was made use of for a bit of bread which hardly sufficed to keep him from want. This man carried in his features the marks of forty years of age; and in spite of the dilapidation visible in his costume, there was in the whole of his appearance a singular nobility of expression, which neither age nor grief had been able to destroy. I asked, concerning him, some questions of my guide.

"He is," answered Aloysius, "a strange painter who came to us at the time when we were thinking of repairing our church. This circumstance was for him, as well as ourselves, very fortunate, for the poor devil was destitute of everything, and we would have found with difficulty, and even then at great expense, a man so capable as he is, to undertake and perform successfully so difficult a piece of work. On this account we pay him particular attention; besides his pay, he sits at table with the superiors. This is a favor which he does not abuse. I have never seen so sober a man; he is nearly an anchorite. But come with me and look at some valuable paintings with which we have ornamented the lower side of the nave. With the exception of the painting of Dominiquin, these are masterpieces of unknown painters of the Italian school; but you will agree, I am sure, that a work has not always need of

being signed by the name of the artist to give it value, and that we possess enough here to make the richest amateurs envious."

The father was right ; and it seemed to me that even the canvas of Dominiquin was inferior to the other paintings. One of them was carefully veiled. I asked the reason of this.

"That is," said Aloysius, "the best one that we have ; we are indebted for this work to a young artist, who perhaps will never make any others. And without giving me time to insist, he drew me along, as if to avoid any more questions on this subject. We reëntered the college buildings, and the obliging professor proposed to me to go on a visit, that same day, to the country seat of the fathers. We returned from this excursion at a pretty late hour. A storm was gathering, and I had hardly returned to my hotel when the rain commenced like a deluge. Towards midnight the weather cleared up ; the stars became visible in the blue sky, and, leaning on the sill of my window, I breathed with delight the emanations of the earth. Little by little, my feelings became so excited, that I could not resist the desire to go out and walk around the place whilst waiting the inclination to sleep. I passed again before the church of the Jesuits : as a feeble light struggled through the windows, I approached nearer ; the little side door was not shut ; I glided behind a pillar, and from there I perceived a wax taper lighted in front of a niche over which a netting was suspended. In the shadow there was a man busy ascending and descending the steps of a ladder. I recognized Berthold, who was tracing in black on the interior wall of the niche all the lines of shade projected by the netting. A little farther, on a large easel, was the design of an altar. I comprehended immediately the ingenious process which Berthold was making use of. Having to paint in the niche an altar in relief, on a curved, instead of a plane surface, he had applied a net, whose uniform squares cast curved shadows on the concavity of the wall ;

and, by this means, the altar drawn in perspective, offered itself to the eye in relief. During this labor, which absorbed all his faculties, Berthold appeared quite otherwise, than I had formerly seen him. His face was animated, his looks expressed a satisfaction without alloy ; and when he had finished tracing on the wall the shadow of the net, he stood some minutes before this sketch ; and, notwithstanding the holiness of the place, commenced humming the chorus of a very lively air ; then as he turned to detach the net, which fell to the floor, he perceived me standing immovably in the place that I had not quitted.

“ Hallo ! hallo, there ! ” cried he ; “ is that you, Christian ? ”

I thought, then, that it was my duty to approach and apologize for my intrusion, paying Berthold at the same time the most eulogistic compliments on the exquisite art with which he had made use of the net. But without replying a single word to my graciousness, he said :

“ Christian is an idle fellow, with whom I can do nothing ; he was to have come to pass the whole night with me, and I will lay a wager that he has gone and hid himself in some corner to sleep at his ease, without care for my labor. To-morrow, in the day time, I can no longer paint in this niche ; and yet I cannot work alone now.”

I then offered my services.

“ Zounds ! ” replied Berthold, laughing, and laying both his hands rudely on my shoulders ; “ Zounds, that was well said ; and Christian, to-morrow, will make a strange face at seeing that we can do without him. To work, then, fine journeyman that chance lends to the artist ; to work !—and first let us set about raising a scaffolding.”

It was done as soon as said, thanks to the dexterity of Berthold and to the zeal which I showed in my functions of amateur assistant. I could not but sufficiently admire the precision, the boldness of touch, and the sureness of hand which advanced surprisingly the work of the artist.

“Master,” said I to him, “it is easy to guess, on seeing you, that you are not ignorant of any of the secrets of your art; but have you never executed paintings of other kinds than frescoes? Historical and landscape pieces are in the first rank in the domain of the painter’s art; imagination enriches them with all its charms, and the cold severity of mathematical lines does not stop at every step the soaring of the artist, as in this false animation that you give to stone by the illusions of perspective.”

Berthold, whilst listening to me, laid aside his pencil; he leaned his burning forehead upon his hand, and replied to me in a slow and grave tone of voice:

“Do not profane the holiness of art, by establishing among its works those degrees of inferiority which degrade the humble subjects of a despot. The true artist is not always he who, overstepping the limits traced by rule, loses himself in the spheres of the unknown. It is dangerous to attempt to wrestle with the Creator. Recollect, my young friend, the fable of Prometheus. This great artist of the ancient world had stolen the fire of heaven to animate men of clay; but you know what his punishment was. God does not allow the mystery of his power to be penetrated with impunity.”

“But, Berthold,” replied I, “what guilty temerity can you find in the re-production of beauty and exterior life, by painting, sculpture, and the other arts of imitation?”

“Those are, in truth, but child’s play,” replied the painter with a bitter smile; “that is a pitiful simplicity which imagines that anything is created by daubing, with brushes dipped in colors, squares of cloth of all dimensions. Poor madmen are they who allow themselves to be absorbed by such labors! But when the soul of the artist quits terrestrial regions to spring towards the ideal world, when, a new Prometheus, he attempts to imprison in the work of his hands some spark ravished from the world of spirits, it is then that an irresistible force draws him into the quicksands, and by a fatal illusion, the devil *Pride* makes him see at the bottom

of a gulf the deceitful reflection of the star that his imprudent eye sought for in heaven."

Berthold made a pause, passed his hand over his forehead, as if to brush off a cloud; then, raising his head, he continued:—"What am I talking about! would I not be better employed in finishing my task, instead of discussing such vain subtleties? Look, my friend, look at this work; rule has conducted each line of it; hence what neatness! what exactness! all this enters into geometrical calculation, whose application the mind of man can exercise. All which goes beyond this measure, all which rises to the fantastic, is either a special gift of God or an hallucination of hell. God has communicated to us the secrets of art in proportion to the wants felt by poor humanity. Thus, mechanics produce the movement and the life to create mills and time-pieces, or machines to make cloth. All that is in rule, because it is all useful. And so, quite recently, the professor Aloysius maintained that certain animals were created for the purpose of eating others, and he took for example the cat, whose voracious appetite for mice prevents them from eating up all our candles, and all our sugar. And by my faith, the reverend father was right. I say, myself, that men are, in spite of their vanity, only animals, more skilfully organized than others, to create various products, whose contemplation pleases the unknown master of all that exist. But enough of metaphysics. Hallo! my friend, pass me those colors; I yesterday took considerable time to mix them, and I have numbered them with care, so that the flickering of the torches that light my work during the night, should not make me commit errors. Give me number one."

I hastened to obey. Berthold made me pass in review all his colors, which I handed to him one after another,—a tiresome labor, which would not have preserved me from the desire to sleep, if the artist had not sweetened the toil with one of the most original dissertations, and which he alone bore the burden of, on the subject of all kinds of questions,

which he destroyed by a running fire of paradoxes, each more strange than the other. When his arm was fatigued more than his tongue, he descended from his scaffolding. The dawn of day began to pierce the shadows, and the light of the wax candles began to grow pale. I cast a last look at Berthold's painting; it was truly something admirable;—"You are," said I to him, "a strange man, and your work of a night is a thousand times more perfect than the fruits of long studies by our first masters. But one feels, in looking at it, that a burning fever guides your pencil; you are wearing out your strength."

"Good God!" exclaimed Berthold, "these hours of labor which are taking away my days are the only happy ones that I count in my sorrowful life."

"What!" said I, "can you be tormented by any grief, or pursued by the remembrance of any misfortune?"

Berthold gathered together, without saying a word, all his utensils; he then extinguished the wax candles which had furnished him with light, and, coming back to me, he pressed my hand forcibly, and said, with a fixed look, and in a voice trembling with emotion:—"Would you be able to live a single moment without suffering, if your soul was burthened with the remembrance of an ineffacable crime?"

I felt myself chilled with fear on hearing these words, which opened to me revelations hidden from sight in the life of this man. The first light of the rising sun illuminated his face with its ruddy beams, which brought out with more fascination his supernatural paleness. I dared not question him more, and he went out of the church staggering like a drunken man, through a little door which communicated with the college yard.

When I found again the professor Aloysius Walter, I hastily related to him my adventure of the past night, the emotion occasioned by which was still impressed on my countenance. He listened to me coldly, and ended by laughing at what he called my sensibility. However, as I earnestly

pressed him, for it seemed to me that he knew more than he wished to tell, concerning Berthold,

“My friend,” said he, “this man who appears to you, at present, so mysterious, is a very mild being, a good workman, and of very regular habits; but it may be that to his good qualities is joined a weak mind. Formerly he enjoyed quite a reputation as a painter of historical subjects, but since he has got his head crammed with metaphysical nonsense, he is reduced to the poor part of dauber of frescoes. Thus terminate, in one manner or another, all those restless minds that attempt to measure the height of intelligence. But since you wish to know something of his private life, come to the church whilst Berthold is resting from his night of labor; I wish, before all, to show you the preface of my narration.”

The professor Aloysius then conducted me in front of the veiled picture that I had remarked the evening before; it was a composition in the style of Raphael,—Mary the Virgin, and Elizabeth, seated in a garden, with Jesus and John, who were playing with flowers at their feet. In the second part, on one side is seen Joseph praying. No words could express the ravishing grace and wholly celestial character of this painting. Unfortunately, the work was unfinished. The face of the Virgin and those of the two children were alone finished; but that of Elizabeth seemed to await the last touches of the artist: the man who was praying was only sketched.

“This picture,” said father Aloysius, “was sent to us, some years ago, from Upper Silesia; one of our fathers, who was travelling in that country, bought it, by chance, at an auction sale; and, although it was not finished, we have placed it in this frame, in the place of a poor painting which did not fit it. When Berthold came here to work on the frescoes, he perceived this picture, uttered a cry and fainted. We could not obtain from him any revelation of the reason of its making so powerful an impression on him. But since that time, he never passes near it, and I am the only one to whom he has confided that this painting is his last work of

the kind. I have several times tried, but without success, to make him decide upon finishing it; but he has always repulsed my entreaties with marks of a singular aversion; and as it has even been necessary to distract his attention whilst working here, from a cruel anguish which seems never to leave him, it has been necessary to have this frame veiled, whose aspect caused him, even at a distance, frightful fainting fits."

"Poor unfortunate!" exclaimed I, with a deep sensation of pity.

"I think that he is very little to be pitied," gravely continued father Aloysius. "This man, I am sure, has been himself his own demon; for the story of his life does not excuse him. Berthold has made the acquaintance of a young student here; and in friendly confidence, has told him the greatest part of the secrets of his life. This young man had drawn up a kind of a journal of it, that I found on inspecting his papers; for, in our college, it is neither permitted nor possible to hide anything. I have kept this manuscript, and this evening, not only will I show it to you, but I with pleasure make you a gift of it, although I do not suppose that you will find in it any powerful interest."

Here, kind reader, is what this manuscript contained:—

"Let your son follow the fancy that urges him towards Italy. His hand is practised enough, his imagination ardent enough, to make the study of the great models of art profitable to him. Dresden has been the cradle of the painter; it is time that Rome should be the school where his young inspirations shall be purified; he must go and live the free life of the artist, in the bosom of the country in which all the conceptions of the genius of man flourish. The classic soil of the great masters is necessary to the painter, as the influence of the warm sun is necessary to the shrub to develope its foliage and gild its ripe fruits. Your son carries within him the sacred fire; let him take a noble flight towards the future."

"Lo que ha de ser no puede faltar."

"What is to be cannot fail."

Thus spoke one day the old painter, Stephen Birkner, to the parents of Berthold. They sold all that they possessed to furnish the valise of their son with the modest baggage that he needed; and soon this Raphael in embryo found himself at the height of his wishes. His first essays had given preference to landscape paintings; but when he found himself at Rome, in the midst of artists and amateurs, he heard constantly repeated that historical painting was the only style that merited the name of art, and that all others signified nothing. These exalted opinions, in the midst of which lived young Berthold, joined to the magic effect produced on him by the contemplation of the Vatican frescoes, masterpieces of Raphael Sanzio, decided his new vocation. He set himself about copying, on a reduced scale, the works of the best masters, and was not without encouragement in this dry labor; but he was unceasingly pursued by the thought that the artist only exists by the originality and life with which he stamps his works. Did he try to sketch a creation, he felt his strength fail him; the idea, seen for an instant, suddenly fled, and was lost in the misty distance, as soon as he thought that he could seize it, and he found nothing on his canvas but features without character and immovable scenes. The result of these useless strugglings was to throw Berthold into a savage melancholy; and he went out alone, every day, far from the city, in desert places, and there, in secret, he tried to draw his sketches; and his grief increased to find that he had even lost much of his facility in this style; and he began to doubt his vocation and despair for the future. He wrote a very sorrowful letter to Birkner; but the old artist remembered that he had himself passed many days of anxiety and discouragement.

“Have patience, my son,” replied he to Berthold: “he who, filled with a blind presumption, imagines that he can advance in the career of arts progressively, is a poor madman, from whom there is nothing more to hope. Leave routine to the timid, clear with one bound the common track, and when thou shalt have created a path where none can follow thee,

when thou shalt have given life to a free work, loosened from the fetters of ordinary rule, thy place will be fixed, and thou wilt see coming towards thee with an even step, both glory and fortune."

When Berthold received Birkner's letter, an idea suddenly pervaded his mind like a flash of lightning. The reputation of the German landscape painter, Phillip Hackert, was at its height, and the historical painters themselves, envious and exclusive as they might have been, recognized without hesitation the extent of his talent. Berthold resolved to go to Naples to become the pupil of so distinguished a master. Hackert welcomed him with that kindness which is the character of true genius, and his young countryman profited so well by his lessons, that he was not long in becoming his rival. Only this, poor Berthold could not hide from himself, that it does not suffice to give exactly the details of trees, of foliage and perspective, or mix skilfully the tints of a sky fringed with warm and gilded vapors; he understood that his landscapes wanted that something which is admired in the scenes of Claude Lorraine and the beautiful deserts of Salvator Rosa. Berthold inquired of himself every day, if the reputation of Hackert was not greater than its value, and if the lessons of the master would not guide the student in a false direction. However, he carefully combatted these doubts which seemed culpable, and resolutely condemned himself to walk in the footsteps of his model. It happened one day that Hackert requested, that amongst some of his own compositions, Berthold should expose in public a landscape of considerable dimensions, faithfully copied from nature. All the persons who visited the museum were of unanimous opinion concerning the exquisite perfection of the pictures exposed to their criticism. One man alone, middle aged, and singularly dressed, distinguished himself by his silence from the crowd of lookers on, who distributed their fulsome praises.

Berthold, who followed his look, observed that when he

arrived before his picture the unknown shook his head doubtfully, and passed disdainfully on. Vexed, in spite of his natural modesty, by this kind of depreciation, Berthold went and placed himself before this person, whom he looked upon as an adversary, and said to him, in a tone which showed plainly his ill humor,

"Would you have the kindness, sir, to point out what you find that shocks you in this composition, so that by the assistance of your opinion I may be able to correct it?"

The unknown fixed a penetrating glance upon Berthold, and contented himself with replying :

"Young man, there was in you the material for a great artist !"

These words froze the poor pupil of Hackert ; he could not find words to reply, and remained for a long time nailed to the spot. Master Hackert found him still bewildered at this speech. But when Berthold had described the person to him :

"Ah, good !" exclaimed the painter, "is that all that grieves thee? Console thyself, quickly ; for the man who has just spoken to thee is an old grumbler that we are accustomed to seeing periodically strolling about. He is a Greek, born at Malta ; he is as rich as he is singular, and understands himself passably well in painting ; but the works that he has produced himself, bear the stamp of such singularity, that it can only be attributed to his mania for putting forth at all times the most exaggerated paradoxes. That is the deplorable system which has rendered both his judgment and his taste false. But I care, indeed, as little for his blame as his praise. My reputation is too old to meet with a check from his caprice."

Berthold soon forgot the kind of warning of the Maltese ; he set himself to work with renewed vigor ; and to double the success, which his great landscape had obtained, he resolved to paint its companion. Hackert chose for a subject, one of the finest views in Naples, illumined by the rising sun,

to contrast with the first landscape, which offered an evening scene. Now, one morning that Berthold, seated on the capital of a ruined column, was finishing, in bold outline, his sketch, he heard a voice near him exclaim,

“That is well done ! The drawing is perfect !”

He raised his eyes, and they met those of the Maltese.

“You have forgotten only one thing,” continued the latter ; “look, that wall, draped with a wild vine, has a gate half open in it ; it would be prodigious to draw skilfully the shadow of that half opened door.”

“You are joking, sir, I see very well,” said Berthold in an offended tone : “But know that the most trifling details are not to be neglected in a landscape carefully painted. I know, besides, that it is the part you assume, to ridicule this kind of compositions ; so, I beg of you, to cut short all useless discussions, to leave me to pursue my work in peace.”

“Young man,” replied the stranger, “your assurance pleases me, and well becomes you ; but remember my first words ; yes, there was in you the material for a great artist, but you are following the wrong direction. I am not the enemy of any branch of art ; both landscape and historical paintings require an equal degree of special qualities. The aim of painters is always the same ; to seize nature, and in fact reproduce at the moment when is best manifested its relation with the infinite world ; such is the mission of art ; but servile imitation will never fulfil this condition. A copied painting resembles the transcribing of a text in a foreign language, in which an ignorant copyist would be obliged to imitate the letters of words which he could not read. But the true artist, that is to say the man who feels, draws towards him the divine essence, is penetrated through all his pores by it, and gives a mysterious life to scenes that he spreads out upon his canvas. Look at the pictures of the old masters ; truly, in admiring them, the spectator does not examine closely to see if the leaves of the pine or linden trees are well distinguished by all the details of their tissues ; it is

the appearance of the whole which touches and entrances him. The mean detail, to his eyes, is no longer art, it is imitation without color, it is mechanism deprived of movement. As to the rest, my friend, I do not seek to turn you from what you believe to be your vocation. I have guessed in you the slumbering fire of genius, and I have tried to light it up into a real flame. Farewell !”

A sudden revolution took place in the thoughts of Berthold, after hearing these words from the mouth of the Maltese. Renouncing the direction which he had followed until then, he quitted his master, and gave himself up, without reserve, to all the vagabond habits of a savage life. Seeking to break, by fatigue of the body, the anguish of his mind, he wandered from morning until night over the mountain and plain. This forced exercise dissipating gradually the vapors by which he was possessed, he found again the calm which had so long fled from him. In one of these excursions, he became acquainted with two young artists, who, like him, had come from Dresden. One of them, who was named Florentin, occupied himself much less with serious studies than with enriching his portfolio with a quantity of agreeable sketches full of spirit and dramatic movement, in spite of the rapidity of their execution. In looking over these drawings, Berthold felt his soul illumined by a light which he had never before been aware of. The picturesque method of Florentin singularly pleased his intelligence, greedy of knowing and realizing artistic truth. He set about copying, with a lively pleasure, the sketches of his friend, and succeeded pretty well in reproducing them, although it was impossible for him to give them the life and animation of the originals. What the Maltese had told him came back to his mind, and he related it to Florentin.

“I am of his opinion,” answered Florentin ; “I believe, that to arrive at producing the artistic resemblance, it is necessary at first, to familiarize oneself with the types which come the most frequently under our observation. Resign

thyself to drawing faces, until thou hast acquired assurance enough to seize the features at once. Thou wilt pass from that more easily to the reproduction of other objects, and the difficulties which afflict thee now, will vanish imperceptibly."

Berthold profited by the advice of his new friend, and was not long in finding himself better for it. But the ardor with which he labored brought on a nervous enthusiasm, during which he could only produce faces strangely and infinitely varied; the type which was in his thought, manifested itself on the canvas by a kind of moving profile, whose features he could not succeed in fixing. In despair at this excess of activity, which made his hands operate in spite of his will, he threw aside both pencil and brush, and returned to his wandering life.

Not far from the city of Naples arose the country house of a rich lord, who declared himself the patron of foreign painters, and above all of landscape painters. Berthold had been several times to visit this fine domain, from which might be seen the magnificent panorama of the sea and Mount Vesuvius. One day that, leaning on the marble balustrade overlooking the park, he was yielding up his thoughts in vain aspirations for fame, he heard a light foot rustling amongst the foliage, and nearly at the same time a woman of admirable beauty appeared before him as if by enchantment.

A shudder pervaded the veins of Berthold before this apparition, which realized for him the ideal of beauty that his dreams had until then vainly pursued. He fell on his knees, with his hands extended towards this supernatural being who had come to smile upon him; a cloud passed before his eyes. When he recovered his senses, the apparition, angel, woman or demon, had vanished. But in its place, Berthold perceived Florentin.

"Oh, my friend!" exclaimed he, "I have found her at last, I have seen, and nearly touched, the heavenly unknown who made my thoughts delirious!"

At these words, he escaped, before Florentin had been able

to ask him a single question,—he runs, he flies, and returning to his studio, he throws upon the canvas the features which had so strongly moved his soul. This time, guided by enthusiasm, his hand goes not astray ; the sketch is completed, and Berthold recognizes his ideal. Since that day he is no longer the same man. The joy of success has poured into all his senses a new life. His mind, purified from its discouragements, re-attaches itself with vigor to the study of models ; from copying masterpieces he passes to invention, and the results that he obtains are not less fortunate ; decidedly, he excels in painting portraits. Landscape was abandoned, and Hackert, abandoned, was obliged to confess that his student had finally found his only vocation. From that time fortune showered her favors upon Berthold. He had orders for church paintings, and great lords disputed amongst themselves for his pictures, at the price of gold. In all the fancy pieces that he executed, Berthold always reproduced the features of his marvellous apparition. It was found that this face bore a striking resemblance to the princess Angiola T—— ; and the critics took very little care to conceal from those who would listen to their opinion, that the young and fashionable painter was desperately in love with this beautiful lady. Berthold often became irritated at these pleasantries, which seemed to abase his ideal to the mean proportions of a mortal being.

“Do you believe,” said he, “that there can exist, under the sky, so perfect a creature ? No, it is in infinite space that my eye has caught a glimpse of this angel of an unknown world ; it is from that hour of ecstasy that my vocation of painter dates ! ”

When the French army, overrunning Italy, from victory to victory, following the footsteps of Bonaparte, arrived at the gates of Naples, a revolutionary movement, caused by the imminence of the danger, overthrew the whole city. The King and Queen retreated before the sedition. The prime minister of the kingdom concluded a dishonorable

capitulation with the French general, in consequence of which the commissaries of the enemy's army raised enormous contributions. The people arose, the houses of the nobility, suspected of treachery, were pillaged with the cry of "Long live the holy faith!" Moliterno and Rocca Romana, who directed the municipality, made vain efforts to oppose anarchy. The Duke, de la Torre and Clemens Filomarino, two detested patricians, had just served as victims to the insurrection, and nothing could be foreseen of the time of duration of this popular reaction. Berthold, escaped, nearly naked, from his house devoured by the flames, found himself carried forward by a crowd of the armed populace who were going with frightful howlings to the palace of prince T——. Nothing could withstand these furious men. In a few moments, the prince, his servants and a few friends who had joined him were massacred without pity, and the flames finished what the knife had commenced. Berthold still carried on by this band of robbers, had traversed many rooms in the palace, which a black smoke already filled; he tried to fly, but found no outlet, when a cry of distress struck upon his ear. He sprang towards it, burst open a door, and sees a woman who is struggling beneath the dagger of a beggar.

"Great God! it is the princess! it is the heavenly apparition which Berthold had seen but once. A superhuman strength exalted the courage of the exhausted artist; after a short struggle he overthrows the beggar and stabs him with his own poignard; then raising in his nervous arms, the beautiful Angiola, he traverses again all the rooms of the palace devoured by the fire, reaches the door, makes his way through the crowd, who gave way before his bloody dagger, and, after having walked a long time at the mercy of chance, he reaches a quarter of the city rendered desert by the affray; he deposits his precious burden in the corner of a shed, and, broken by so many emotions, falls senseless by the side of Angiola. When he opened his eyes again, the beautiful princess, on her knees at his side, was bathing with water his

forehead, blackened by the fire and covered with blood and dust. Berthold thought that he was dreaming, but Angiola said to him :

“ My friend, my savior, I recognize thee, thou art Berthold, the celebrated German painter ; thou hast seen me but once before, and thou hast loved me so much, that my features were reproduced under thy pencil in all thy works. Then a great distance separated us, and I could not be thine ; but now, in Naples, destroyed by fire, there is no longer any patricians nor separations required by the pride of rank. Come, Berthold, let us fly, let us go and seek a home in thy country : I am thine forever ! ”

The artist was beside himself ; so much unexpected happiness exceeded his strength ; but love performs miracles, and after many dangers the two fugitives succeeded in escaping from the city without being recognized or pursued. They approached gradually the south of Germany, where Berthold hoped to create, by his talents, a rich and happy life for Angiola. Arrived in the city of M——, he resolved to establish, at one trial, his reputation, by painting a large church picture. He chose for his subject, the Virgin Mary and Elizabeth having at their feet the child Jesus and St. John. This composition was very simple ; but this time the artist had lost his power. His ideas had become confused again ; he did nothing but commence and efface without any success. The face of the Virgin had, in spite of him, features of terrestrial beauty ; it was the face of Angiola, but deprived of all its poetry. The beautiful Neapolitan sat to him in all the brilliancy of her charms ; the painter only succeeded in fixing on the canvas nothing but waxen tints, with mournful and glassy eyes. Then his melancholy attacked him again with unheard of pains ; the loss of his talent plunged him into frightful misery, which was augmented by the birth of a son. Misery leads, by a fatal drag, either to crime or madness. Berthold took an aversion to his poor wife, who nevertheless, did not complain ; and as suffering and privations had faded her attractions :

“No,” said he to himself one day, “this is not the ideal being that I saw; this cursed creature took for a time her celestial form to seduce me and draw me into her snares! This is not a woman, it is a demon!”

And the miserable man, a prey to fits of delirium, made use of such cruel treatment towards Angiola and her child, that the neighbors became indignant and denounced him to the magistrate. Berthold, warned that they were coming to arrest him, disappeared from his garret with his wife and child. They were unable, at first, to find out what had become of him. Sometime afterwards he came to N——, in Upper Silesia. But he was alone then, and he undertook to recommence the picture of the Virgin; but he could not succeed in finishing it. A languishing disease was carrying him to the grave step by step. It was necessary for him, in order to exist, and pay for some remedies, to sell the last of his property, and even his unfinished picture, which were sold at auction by a picture dealer. Death was not yet ready for Berthold. When he had recovered some strength, he went away begging his bread, from door to door, and paying his trifling expenses by painting signs.

Here the manuscript given me by professor Aloysius Walter ended. I concluded that the unfortunate Berthold, become mad with misery, had assassinated his wife and child, to get rid of their support. However, as nothing after all, authorized such a belief, I felt a lively curiosity to interrogate him adroitly in one of his moments of good humor, to which he sometimes gave himself up when his labor went to his liking.

I went back to the church; he was, as formerly, perched on his scaffolding, looking gloomy and absent; he was sketching on the wall tints of rose marbling. I went up and placed myself beside him, to officiously hand him his colors; and as he looked at me with surprise:—“Am I not,” said I to him in a low voice, “your last night’s companion, whom you accepted in the place of that lazy fellow Christian?”

At these words, I saw his lips contract into a smile. This appearing to me to be a good omen, I risked the conversation on the adventures of his life. I reached, by long turnings, that I considered very adroit, to the confidence so greedily hoped for, of the fatal winding up, and to lead to an avowal, I said to him suddenly :—It was then in a fit of fever that you killed your wife and child ?

The thunder falling from heaven, would not have produced a like effect. Berthold dropped his brushes, and, after throwing on me a horrible look, raised his hands towards heaven and cried out :

“ I am pure of the blood of my wife and my child. But if you say another word more, I will throw myself with you down to the floor of the church ! ”

At this threat, feeling very little reassured, and fearing that in a fit of remorse he might wish to kill himself, and draw me with him to the tomb, I rapidly turned the conversation.

“ Good God ! ” exclaimed I, with all the assurance I could affect, “ look Berthold, how that ugly yellow color runs down the wall ! ” And whilst master Berthold turned round to wipe off the color with his largest brush, I gained the ladder, to put myself out of the reach of the dangerous caprices of the Jesuit painter. Some hours after, I took leave of the professor Aloysius Walter, making him promise to keep me informed by letter, of what he could learn new concerning Berthold.

Six months after my journey, he wrote to me :

“ Our strange artist has finished his reparations of the church, and put the last touches to the picture of the Virgin Mary, of which he has made a finished piece. Then he disappeared ; and as two days after his departure they found his hat and stick on the banks of the river O——, everybody here believes that the poor devil put an end to his misery by suicide. Pray for him.”

*Der Sandmann / Nachtsücke in Cello-
manier I. Heft Kempel, ed. n. VII, p. 37*

COPPELIUS, THE SANDMAN.

CERTAINLY you must all be uneasy that I have not written for so long—so very long. My mother, I am sure, is angry, and Clara will believe that I am passing my time in dissipation, entirely forgetful of the fair angel-image that is so deeply imprinted in my heart and mind. Such, however, is not the case. Daily and hourly I think of you all, and in my sweet dreams the kindly form of my lovely Clara passes before me, and smiles upon me with her bright eyes, as she was wont when I appeared among you. Alas, how could I write to you in the distracted mood which has hitherto disturbed my every thought! Something horrible has crossed my path of life. Dark forebodings of a cruel, threatening fate, spread themselves over me like dark clouds, which no friendly sunbeam can penetrate. Now will I tell you what has befallen me. I must do so, that I plainly see—but if I only think of it, it will laugh out of me like mad. Ah, my dear Lothaire, how shall I begin it? How shall I make you in any way sensible that that which occurred to me a few days ago could really have such a fatal effect on my life! If you were here you could see for yourself, but now you will certainly take me for a crazy ghost-seer. In a word, the horrible thing which happened to me, and the painful impression of which I in vain endeavored to escape, is nothing more than this; that some days ago, namely, on the 30th of October, at twelve o'clock at noon, a barometer-dealer came into my room and

offered me his wares. I bought nothing, and threatened to throw him down stairs, upon which he took himself off of his own accord.

You suspect that only relations of the most peculiar kind, and exerting the greatest influence over my life, can give any import to this occurrence, nay, that the person of that unlucky dealer must have a hostile effect upon me. So it is, indeed. I collect myself with all my might, that patiently and quietly I may tell you so much of my early youth as will bring all plainly and clearly in bright images before your active mind. As I am about to begin, I fancy that I hear you laughing and Clara saying: "Childish stories, indeed!" Laugh at me I beseech you, laugh with all your heart. But, heavens, my hair stands on end, and it seems as if I am asking you to laugh at me, in mad despair, as Franz Moor asked Daniel.* But to my story.

Excepting at dinner time, I and my brothers and my sisters saw my father very little during the day. He was, perhaps, busily engaged at his ordinary occupation. After supper, which, according to the old custom, was served up at seven o'clock, we all went with my mother into my father's work-room, and seated ourselves at the round table. My father smoked tobacco and drank a large glass of beer. Often he told us a number of wonderful stories, and grew so warm over them that his pipe continually went out. I had to light it again, with burning paper, which I thought great sport. Often, too, he would give us picture-books, and sit in his arm chair silent and thoughtful, puffing out such thick clouds of smoke, that we all seemed to be swimming in the clouds. On such evenings as these my mother was very melancholy, and immediately after the clock struck nine, she would say: "Now children, to bed—to bed! The Sandman is coming, I can see." And certainly on all these occasions I heard something with a heavy, slow step go bouncing up the stairs.

* Two characters in Schiller's play of "Die Rauber."

That I thought must be the Sandman. Once that dull noise and footstep were particularly fearful, and I asked my mother, while she took us away : “ Eh, mamma, who is this naughty Sandman, who always drives us away from papa ? What does he look like ? ” “ There is no Sandman, dear child,” replied my mother. “ When I say the Sandman comes, I only mean that you are sleepy and cannot keep your eyes open—just as if sand had been sprinkled into them.” This answer of my mother’s did not satisfy me—nay, in my childish mind the thought soon matured itself, that she only denied the existence of the Sandman to hinder us from being terrified at him. Certainly I always heard him coming up the stairs. Full of curiosity to hear more of this Sandman, and his particular connection with children, I at last asked the old woman who tended my youngest sister, what sort of man he was. “ Eh, Natty,” said she, “ do you not know that yet ? He is a wicked man, who comes to children when they will not go to bed, and throws a handful of sand into their eyes, so that they start out bleeding from their heads. These eyes he puts in a bag and carries them to the half-moon to feed his own children, who sit in the nest up yonder, and have crooked beaks like owls, with which they may pick up the eyes of the naughty human children.”

A most frightful image of the cruel Sandman was horribly depicted in my mind, and when in the evening I heard the noise on the stairs, I trembled with agony and alarm. My mother could get nothing out of me, but the cry of “ The Sandman, the Sandman ! ” which was stuttered forth through my tears. I then ran into the bed-room, where the frightful apparition of the Sandman terrified me during the whole night. I had already grown old enough to perceive that the nurse’s tale about the Sandman and the nest of children in the half-moon, could not be quite true, but, nevertheless, this Sandman remained a fearful spectre, and I was seized with the utmost horror, when I heard him not only come up the stairs, but violently force open my father’s room-door and

enter. Sometimes he staid away for a long period, but oftener his visits were in close succession. This lasted for years, and I could not accustom myself to the terrible goblin; the image of the dreadful Sandman did not become more faint. His intercourse with my father began more and more to occupy my fancy. An unconquerable fear prevented me from asking my father about it, but if I—I myself could penetrate the mystery and behold the wondrous Sandman—that was the wish which grew upon me with years. The Sandman had brought me into the path of the marvellous and wonderful, which so readily finds a domicil in the mind of a child. Nothing was to me more delightful than to read or hear horrible stories of goblins, witches, pigmies, &c.; but above them all stood the Sandman, whom, in the oddest and most frightful shapes, I was always drawing with chalk or charcoal on the tables, cupboards, and walls. When I was ten years old, my mother removed me from the children's room into a little chamber, situated in a corridor near my father's room; Still, as before, we were obliged speedily to take our departure as soon as, on the stroke of nine, the unknown was heard in the house. I could hear in my little chamber how he entered my father's room, and then it soon appeared to me that a thin vapor of a singular odor diffused itself about the house. Stronger and stronger with my curiosity grew my resolution to form in some manner the Sandman's acquaintance. Often I sneaked from my room to the corridor, when my mother had passed, but never could I discover any thing, for the Sandman had always gone in at the door when I reached the place where I might have seen him. At last, urged by an irresistible impulse, I resolved to hide myself in my father's room and await the appearance of the Sandman.

By the silence of my father, and the melancholy of my mother, I perceived one evening that the Sandman was coming. I therefore feigned great weariness, left the room before nine o'clock, and hid myself in a corner close to the door,

The house-door creaked, and the heavy, slow, groaning step went through the passage and towards the stairs. My mother passed me with the rest of the children. Softly, very softly; I opened the door of my father's room. He sat as usually, stiff and silent, with his back turned to the door. He did not perceive me, and I swiftly darted into the room and behind the curtain, drawn before an open press, which stood close to the door, and in which my father's clothes were hanging. The steps sounded nearer and nearer—there was a strange coughing and scraping and murmuring without. My heart trembled with anxiety and expectation. A sharp step close—very close to the door—a smart stroke on the latch, and the door was open with a rattling noise. Screwing up my courage with all my might, I cautiously peeped out. The Sandman was standing before my father in the middle of the room; the light of the candles shone full upon his face. The Sandman, the fearful Sandman, was the old advocate Coppelius, who had often dined with us.

But the most hideous form could not have inspired me with deeper horror than this very Coppelius. Imagine a large broad-shouldered man, with a head disproportionately big, a face the color of yellow ochre, a pair of grey bushy eye-brows, from beneath which a pair of green cat's eyes sparkled with the most penetrating lustre, and with a large nose curved over his upper lip. His wry mouth was often twisted into a malicious laugh, when a couple of dark red spots appeared upon his cheeks, and a strange hissing sound was heard through his compressed teeth. Coppelius always appeared in an ashen-grey coat, cut in old-fashioned style, with waistcoat and breeches of the same color, while his stockings were black, and his shoes adorned with buckles set with precious stones. The little peruke scarcely reached further than the crown of his head, the curls stood high above his large red ears, and a broad hair-bag projected stiffly from his neck, so that the silver buckle which fastened his folded cravat might be plainly seen. The whole figure was hideous and repulsive,

but most disgusting to us children were his coarse brown hairy fists ; indeed, we did not like to eat what he had touched with them. This he had remarked, and it was his delight, under some pretext or other, to touch a piece of cake, or some nice fruit, that our kind mother might privately have put in our plate, in order that we, with tears in our eyes, might, from disgust and abhorrence, no longer be able to enjoy the treat intended for us. He acted in the same manner on holidays, when my father gave us a little glass of sweet wine. Then would he swiftly draw his fist over it, or perhaps he would even raise the glass to his blue lips, and laugh most devilishly, when we could only express our indignation by soft sobs. He always called us the little beasts ; we dared not utter a sound when he was present, and we heartily cursed the ugly, unkind man, who deliberately marred our slightest pleasures. My mother seemed to hate the repulsive Coppelius as much as we did, since as soon as he showed himself, her liveliness, her free and cheerful mind were changed into a gloomy solemnity. My father conducted himself towards him, as though he was a superior being, whose bad manners were to be tolerated, and who was to be kept in good humor at any rate. He need only give the slightest hint, and the favorite dishes were cooked, and the choicest wines served.

When I now saw this Coppelius, the frightful and terrific thought took possession of my soul, that indeed no one but he could be the Sandman. But the Sandman was no longer that bugbear of a nurse's tale, who provided the owl's nest in the half-moon with children's eyes,—no, he was a hideous spectral monster, who, wherever he appeared, brought with him grief, want and destruction—temporal and eternal.

I was rivetted to the spot as if enchanted. At the risk of being discovered, and as I plainly foresaw, of being severely punished, I remained with my head peeping through the curtain. My father received Coppelius with solemnity. “ Now to our work ! ” cried the latter with a harsh, grating voice, as he flung off his coat. My father silently and gloomily

drew off his night-gown, and both attired themselves in long black frocks. Whence they took these, I did not see. My father opened the door of what I had always thought to be a cupboard, but I now saw that it was no cupboard, but rather a black hollow, in which there was a little hearth. Coppelius entered, and a blue flame began to crackle up on the hearth. All sorts of strange utensils lay around. Heavens!—As my old father now stooped down to the fire, he looked quite another man. A frightful convulsive pain seemed to have distorted his mild reverend features into a hideous, repulsive, diabolical countenance. He looked like Coppelius: the latter was brandishing red hot tongs, and with them taking shining masses busily out of the thick smoke, which he afterwards hammered. It seemed to me, as if I saw human faces around without any eyes—but with deep holes instead. “Eyes here, eyes!” said Coppelius in a dull roaring voice. Overcome by the wildest terror, I shrieked out, and fell from my hiding place upon the floor. Coppelius seized me, and showing his teeth, bleated out, “Ah—little wretch,—little wretch!”—then dragging me up, he flung me on the hearth, where the fire began to singe my hair. “Now we have eyes enough—a pretty pair of child’s eyes.” Thus whispered Coppelius, and taking out of the flame some red-hot grains with his fists, he was about to sprinkle them in my eyes. My father, upon this, raised his hands in supplication, and cried: “Master, master, leave my Nathaniel his eyes!”

Coppelius uttered a yelling laugh, and said: “Well, let the lad have his eyes, and cry his share in the world, but we will examine the mechanism of his hands and feet. And then he seized me so forcibly that my joints cracked, and screwed off my hands and feet, and put them on again, one here and one there. “Every thing is not right here!—As good as it was—the old one has understood it!” So did Coppelius say, in a hissing, lisping tone, but all around me became black and dark, a sudden cramp darted through my bones and nerves—and I lost all feeling. A gentle warm

breath passed over my face ; I awoke as out of a sleep of death. My mother had been stooping over me. "Is the Sandman yet there?" I stammered. "No, no, my dear child, he has gone away long ago,—he will not hurt you!" So said my mother, and she kissed and embraced her recovering darling.

Why should I weary you, my dear Lothaire! Why should I be so diffuse with details, when I have so much more to tell. Suffice it to say, that I had been discovered while watching, and ill-used by Coppélius. Agony and terror had brought on delirium and fever, of which I lay sick for several weeks. "Is the Sandman still there?" That was my first sensible word and the sign of my amendment—my recovery. I can now only tell you, the most frightful moment in my juvenile years. Then you will be convinced that it is no fault of my eyes, that all to me seems colorless, but that a dark fatality has actually suspended over my life a gloomy veil of clouds, which I shall, perhaps, only tear away in death.

Coppélius was no more to be seen ; it was said he had left the town.

About a year might have elapsed, when, according to the old custom, we sat at the round table. My father was very cheerful, and told much that was entertaining, about his travels in his youth ; when, as the clock struck nine, we heard the house-door creak on the hinges, and slow steps, heavy as iron, groaned through the passage and up stairs. "That is Coppélius," said my mother, turning pale. "Yes! that is Coppélius!" repeated my father, with a faint broken voice. The tears started from my mother's eyes. "But father—father!" she cried, "must it be so?"

"He comes to me for the last time, I promise you." was the answer. "Only go now—go with the children—go—go to bed. Good night!"

I felt as if I were pressed into cold, heavy stone,—my breath was stopped. My mother caught me by the arm as I stood immovable. "Come, come, Nathaniel!" I allowed

myself to be led, and entered my chamber! "Be quiet—be quiet—go to bed—go to sleep!" cried my mother after me; but tormented by restlessness, and an inward anguish perfectly indescribable, I could not close my eyes. The hateful, abominable Coppelius stood before me with fiery eyes, and laughed at me maliciously. It was in vain that I endeavored to get rid of his image. About midnight there was a frightful noise, like the firing of a gun. The whole house resounded. There was a rattling and a rustling by my door, and the house-door was closed with a violent sound. "That is Coppelius!" I cried, and I sprang out of bed in terror. There was then a shriek as if of acute inconsolable grief. I darted into my father's room; the door was open, a suffocating smoke rolled towards me, and the servant girl cried:

"Ah, my master, my master!" On the floor of the smoking hearth lay my father dead, with his face burned and blackened, and hideously distorted,—my sisters were shrieking and moaning around him,—and my mother had fainted. "Coppelius!—cursed Satan, thou hast slain my father!" I cried, and lost my senses. When, two days afterwards, my father was laid in his coffin, his features were again as mild and gentle as they had been in his life. My soul was comforted by the thought that his compact with the devilish Coppelius could not have plunged him into eternal perdition.

The explosion had awakened the neighbors, the occurrence had become the common talk, and had reached the ears of the magistracy, who wished to make Coppelius answerable. He had, however, vanished from the spot, without leaving a trace.

If I tell you, my dear friend, that the barometer-dealer was the accursed Coppelius himself, you will not blame me for regarding a phenomenon so unpropitious as boding some heavy calamity. He was dressed differently, but the figure and features of Coppelius are too deeply imprinted in my mind, for an error in this respect to be possible. Besides, Coppelius

has not even altered his name. As I hear, he gives himself out as a Piedmontese optician, and calls himself Giuseppe Coppola.

I am determined to cope with him, and to avenge my father's death, be the issue what it may.

Tell my mother nothing of the hideous monster's appearance. Remember me to my dear sweet Clara, to whom I will write in a calmer mood.—Farewell.

CLARA TO NATHANIEL.

It is true that you have not written to me for a long time, but nevertheless I believe that I am still in your mind and thoughts. For assuredly you were thinking of me most intently, when, designing to send your last letter to my brother Lothaire, you directed it to me, instead of him. I joyfully opened the letter, and did not perceive my error till I came to the words: "Ah, my dear Lothaire." Now, by rights I should have read no farther, but should have handed over the letter to my brother. Although you have often in your childish teasing mood, charged me with having such a quiet, womanish, steady disposition, that like the lady, even if the house were about to fall in, I should smoothe down a wrong fold in the window curtain before I ran away, I can hardly tell you how your letter shocked me. I could scarcely breathe,—my eyes became dizzy. Ah; my dear Nathaniel, how could such a horrible event have crossed your life? To be parted from you, never to see you again—the thought darted through my breast like a burning dagger. I read and read. Your description of the repulsive Coppelius is terrific. For the first time I learned how your good old father died a shocking violent death. My brother Lothaire, to whom I gave up the letter as his property, sought to calm me, but in vain. The fatal barometer-maker, Giuseppe Coppola, followed me at every step, and I am almost ashamed to confess that he disturbed my healthy, and generally peaceful sleep, with all sorts of horrible visions. Yet soon,—even the next day, I

was quite changed again. Do not be offended, dearest one, if Lothaire tells you, that in spite of your strange misgiving, that Coppelius will in some manner injure you, I am in the same cheerful unembarrassed frame of mind as ever.

I will honestly confess to you that, according to my opinion, all the terrible things of which you speak, merely occurred in your own mind, and that the actual external world had little to do with them. Old Coppelius may have been repulsive enough, but his hatred of children was what really caused the abhorrence of your children towards him.

In your childish mind the frightful Sandman in the nurse's tale was naturally associated with old Coppelius, who, even if you had not believed in the Sandman, would still have been a spectral monster, especially dangerous to children. The awful nightly occupation with your father, was no more than this, that both made alchemical experiments, and with these your mother was constantly dissatisfied, since, besides a great deal of money being uselessly wasted, your father's mind being filled with a fallacious desire after higher wisdom, was alienated from his family—as they say is always the case with such experimentalists. Your father, no doubt, by some act of carelessness, occasioned his own death, of which Coppelius was completely guiltless. Would you believe it, that I, yesterday, asked our neighbor, the clever apothecary, whether such a sudden and fatal explosion was possible in such chemical experiments? “Certainly,” he replied, and in his way told me at great length, and very circumstantially, how such an event might take place, uttering a number of strange-sounding names, which I am unable to recollect. Now, I know you will be angry with your Clara; you will say that her cold disposition is impenetrable to every ray of the mysterious, which often embraces man with invisible arms, that she only sees the variegated surface of the world, and has the delight of a silly child, at some gold-glittering fruit, which contains within it a deadly poison.

Ah! my dear Nathaniel! Do you not then believe that

even in free, cheerful, careless minds, there may dwell the suspicion of some dread power, which endeavors to destroy us in our own selves? Forgive me, if I, a silly girl, presume in any manner to indicate what I really think of such an internal struggle; I shall not find out the right words after all, and you will laugh at me, not because my thoughts are foolish, but because I set about so clumsily to express them.

If there is a dark power, which with such enmity and treachery lays a thread within us, by which it holds us fast, and draws us along a path of peril and destruction, which we should not otherwise have trod; if, I say, there is such a power, it must form itself within us, or from ourselves; indeed, become identical with ourselves, for it is only in this condition that we can believe in it, and grant it the room which it requires, to accomplish its secret work. Now, if we have a mind, which is sufficiently firm, sufficiently strengthened by cheerful life, always to recognize this strange hostile operation as such, and calmly to follow the path which belongs to our inclination and calling, then will the dark power fail in its attempt to gain a power, that shall be a reflection of ourselves. Lothaire adds that it is certain, that the dark physical power, if, of our own accord, we have yielded ourselves up to it, often draws within us some strange form, which the external world has thrown in our way, so that we, ourselves, kindle the spirit, which, as we in our strange delusion believe, speaks to us in that form. It is the phantom of our own selves, the close relationship with which, and its deep operation on our mind, casts us into hell, or transports us into heaven. You see, dear Nathaniel, that I and my brother Lothaire have freely given our opinion on the subject of dark powers, which subject, now I find I have not been able to write down the chief part without trouble, appears to me somewhat deep. Lothaire's last words I do not quite comprehend. I can only suspect what he means, and yet I feel as if it were all very true. I beg of you, get the ugly advocate Coppelius, and the barometer-seller, Giuseppe Coppola,

quite out of your head. Be convinced that these strange fears have no power over you, and that it is only a belief in their hostile influence that can make them hostile in reality. If the great excitement of your mind did not speak from every line of your letter, if your situation did not give me the deepest pain, I could joke about the Sandman-Advocate, and the barometer-seller, Coppelius. Be cheerful, I have determined to appear before you as your guardian-spirit, and if the ugly Coppelius takes it into his head to annoy you in your dreams, to scare him away with loud peals of laughter. I am not a bit afraid of him nor of his disgusting hands; he shall neither spoil my sweetmeats as an advocate, nor my eyes as a sandman. Ever yours, my dear Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL TO LOTHAIRE.

I am very sorry that in consequence of the error occasioned by my wandering state of mind, Clara broke open the letter intended for you, and read it. She has written me a very profound philosophical epistle, in which she proves, at great length, that Coppelius and Coppola only exist in my own mind, and are phantoms of myself, which will be dissipated directly when I recognize them as such. Indeed, one could not believe that the mind which often peers out of those bright smiling, childish eyes, like a sweet charming dream, could define with such intelligence, in such a professor-like manner. She appeals to you—you, it seems have been talking about me. I suppose you read her logical lectures, that she may learn to divide and sift every thing acutely. Pray leave it off. Besides, it is quite certain that the barometer-dealer, Giuseppe Coppola, is not the advocate Coppelius. I attend the lectures of the professor of physics, who has lately arrived. His name is the same as that of the famous natural philosopher, Spalanzani, and he is of Italian origin. He has known Coppola for years, and moreover, it is clear from his accent that he is really a Piedmontese. Coppelius was a German, but I think no honest one. Calmed I am not, and

though you and Clara may consider me a gloomy visionary, I cannot get rid of the impression, which the accursed face of Coppelius makes upon me. I am glad that Coppelius has left the town, as Spalanzani says. This professor is a strange fellow—a little round man, with high cheek bones, a sharp nose, pouting lips, and little piercing eyes. Yet you will get a better notion of him than by this description, if you look at the portrait of Cagliostro, designed by Chodowiecki, in one of the Berlin annuals; Spalanzani looks like that exactly. I lately went up stairs, and perceived that the curtain, which was generally drawn completely over a glass door, left a little opening on one side. I know not what curiosity impelled me to look through; a tall and very slender lady, most symmetrically formed, and most splendidly attired, sat in the room by a little table, on which she had laid her arms, her hands being folded together. She sat opposite to the door, so that I could completely see her angelic countenance. She did not appear to see me, and indeed there was something fixed about her eyes as if, I might almost say, she had no power of sight. It seemed to me that she was sleeping with her eyes open. I felt very uncomfortable, and therefore I slunk away into the auditorium, which was close at hand. Afterwards I learned that the form I had seen was that of Spalanzani's daughter, Olympia, whom he kept confined in a very strange and improper manner, so that no one could approach her. After all, there may be something the matter with her; she is silly, perhaps, or something of the kind. But why should I write you all this? I could have conveyed it better and more circumstantially by word of mouth. Know that I shall see you in a fortnight. I must again behold my dear, sweet angelic Clara. The ill-humor will then be dispersed, which, I must confess, has endeavored to get the mastery over me, since that fatal, sensible letter. Therefore I do not write to her to-day. A thousand greetings, &c.

Nothing more strange and chimerical can be imagined than that which occurred to my poor friend, the young student Nathaniel, and which I, gracious reader, have undertaken to tell you. Have you, kind reader, ever known a something that has completely filled your heart, thoughts and senses, so as to exclude every thing else? There was in you a fermentation and a boiling, and your blood, inflamed to the hottest glow, bounded through your veins, and gave a higher color to your cheeks. Your glance was so strange, as if you wished to perceive, in empty space, forms which to no other eyes are visible, and your speech flowed away into dark sighs. Then your friends asked you: "What is it, revered one?" "What is the matter, dear one." And now you wished to express the internal picture with all its glowing tints, with all its light and shade, and labored hard to find words only to begin. You thought that in the very first word you ought to crowd together all the wonderful, noble, horrible, comical, frightful, that had happened, so that it might strike all the hearers at once like an electric shock. But every word, every thing that is in the form of speech, appeared to you colorless, cold and dead. You hunt and hunt, stutter and stammer, and the sober questions of your friends dart like icy breezes upon your internal fire until it is ready to go out; whereas if, like a bold painter, you had first with a few daring strokes drawn an outline of the internal picture, you might with small trouble, have laid on the colors brighter and brighter, and the living throng of various forms would have carried your friends along with it, and they, like you, would have seen themselves in the picture that had proceeded from your mind. Now I must confess to you, kind reader, that no one has really asked me for the history of the young Nathaniel, but you know well enough that I belong to the queer race of authors, who, if they have anything in their mind, such as I have just described, feel as if every one who comes near them, and indeed perhaps the whole world besides, is asking them: "What is it then—tell it, my dear friend?" Thus was I

forcibly compelled to tell you of the momentous life of Nathaniel. The singularity and marvellousness of the story filled my entire soul, but for that very reason and because, my reader, I had to make you equally inclined to endure oddity, which is no small matter, I tormented myself to begin the history of Nathaniel in a manner as inspiring, original and striking as possible. "Once upon a time," the beginning of every tale, was too tame. "In the little provincial town of S—— lived"—was somewhat better, as it at least prepared for the climax. Or should I dart at once *medias in res*, with "Go to the devil, cried the student Nathaniel, with rage and horror in his wild looks, when the barometer-seller, Giuseppe Coppola?" I had, indeed, already written this down, when I fancied that, in the wild looks of the student Nathaniel, I could detect something ludicrous, whereas the story is not comical at all. No form of language suggested itself to my mind, which even in the slightest degree seemed to reflect the coloring of the internal picture. I resolved that I would not begin it at all. So take, gentle reader, the three letters, which friend Lotharie was good enough to give me, as the sketch of the picture which I shall endeavor to color more and more as I proceed in my narrative. Perhaps, like a good portrait painter, I may succeed in catching many a form in such a manner, that you will find it is a likeness without having the original, and feel as if you had seen the person with your own corporeal eyes. Perchance, dear reader, you will believe that nothing is stranger and madder than actual life, and that this is all the poet can conceive, as it were in the dull reflection of a dimly polished mirror.

In order that that which is necessary in the first place to to know, may be made clearer, we must add to these letters the circumstance, that shortly after the death of Nathaniel's father, Clara and Lothaire, the children of a distant relative, who had likewise died, and left them orphans, were taken by Nathaniel's mother to her own home. Clara and Nathaniel formed a strong attachment for each other, and no one in the

world having any objection to make, they were betrothed, when Nathaniel left the place to pursue his studies in G——. He is, according to the date of his last letter, hearing the lectures of the celebrated professor of physics, Spalanzani.

Now I could proceed in my story with confidence, but at this moment Clara's image stands so plainly before me, that I cannot look another way, as indeed was always the case when she gazed at me, with one of her lively smiles. Clara could not by any means be reckoned beautiful; that was the opinion of all who are competent judges of beauty, by their calling. Nevertheless, the architects praised the exact symmetry of her frame, and the painters considered her neck, shoulders and bosom almost too chastely formed, but then they all fell in love with her wondrous Magdalen-hair, and above everything prated about *battonisch* coloring. One of them, a most fantastical fellow, singularly compared Clara's eyes to a lake by Ruysdael, in which the pure azure of a cloudless sky, the wood and flowery field, the whole cheerful life of the rich landscape are reflected. Poets and composers went still further. "What is a lake—what is a mirror?" said they; "can we look upon the girl without wondrous, heavenly songs and tunes flashing towards us from her glances, and penetrating our inmost soul, so that all there is awakened and stirred. If even then we sing nothing that is really sensible, there is not much in us, and that we can feelingly read in the delicate smile which plays on Clara's lips, when we presume to tinkle something before her which is to pass for a song, although it is only a confused jumble of tones."

So it was. Clara had the vivid fancy of a cheerful, unembarrassed child, a deep, tender, feminine disposition, an acute, clever understanding. The misty dreams had but a bad chance with her, since, though she did not talk,—as indeed talking would have been altogether repugnant to her tacit nature, her bright glance, and her firm ironical smile, would say to them: "Good friends, how can you imagine that I shall take your fleeting shadowy images for real forms with

life and motion ? ” On this account Clara was censured by many as cold, unfeeling and prosaic ; while others, who conceived life in its clear depth, greatly loved the feeling, acute, childlike girl, but none so much as Nathaniel, whose perception in art and science was clear and strong. Clara was attached to her lover with all her soul, and when he parted from her, the first cloud passed over her life. With what transport did she rush into his arms when, as he had promised in his last letter to Lothaire, he had actually returned to his native town and entered his mother's room. Nathaniel's expectations were completely fulfilled ; for directly he saw Clara he thought neither of the Advocate Coppelius, nor of her “ sensible ” letter. All gloomy forebodings had gone.

However, Nathaniel was quite right, when he wrote to his friend Lothaire that the form of the repulsive barometer-seller, Coppola, had had a most hostile effect on his life. All felt, even in the first days, that Nathaniel had undergone a thorough change in his whole temperament. He sank into a gloomy reverie, and conducted himself in a strange manner, that had never been known in him before. Everything, his whole life had become to him a dream and a foreboding, and he was always saying that every man, although he might think himself free, only served for the cruel sport of dark powers. These, he said, it was vain to resist, and man must patiently resign himself to his fate. He went even so far as to say, that it is foolish to think that we do any thing in art and science according to our own self-acting will, for the inspiration which alone enables us to produce any thing, does not proceed from within ourselves, but is the effect of a higher principle without.

To the clear-headed Clara this mysticism was in the highest degree repugnant, but contradiction appeared to be useless. Only when Nathaniel proved that Coppelius was the evil principle, which had seized him at the moment when he was listening behind the curtain, and that this repugnant principle would in some horrible manner disturb the happiness of their

life, Clara grew very serious, and said: "Yes, Nathaniel, you are right. Coppelius is an evil, hostile principle; he can produce terrible effects, like a diabolical power that has come invisibly into life; but only then, when you will not banish him from your mind and thoughts. So long as you believe in him he really exists, and exerts his influence; only your belief is his power."

Nathaniel, quite indignant that Clara established the demon's existence only in his own mind, would then come out with all the mystical doctrine of devils and fearful powers. But Clara would break off peevishly, by introducing some indifferent matter, to the no small annoyance of Nathaniel. He thought that such deep secrets were closed to cold, unsusceptible minds, without being clearly aware that he reckoned Clara among these subordinate natures, and therefore he constantly endeavored to initiate her into the mysteries. In the morning, when Clara was getting breakfast ready, he stood by her, and read out of all sorts of mystical books, till she cried: "But, dear Nathaniel, suppose I blame you as the evil principle, that has a hostile effect upon my coffee? For if to please you, I leave every thing standing still, and look in your eyes, while you read, my coffee will run into the fire, and none of you will get any breakfast."

Nathaniel closed the book at once, and hurried indignantly to his chamber. Once he had a remarkable *forte* for graceful, lively tales, which he wrote down, and to which Clara listened with the greatest delight; now, his creations were gloomy, incomprehensible, formless, so that although Clara, out of compassion, did not say so, he plainly felt how little she was interested. Nothing was more insupportable to Clara than tediousness; in her looks and in her words a mental drowsiness, not to be conquered, was expressed. Nathaniel's productions were indeed, very tedious. His indignation at Clara's cold, prosaic disposition, constantly increased, and Clara could not overcome her dislike of Nathaniel's dark, gloomy, tedious mysticism, so that they became more and more es-

tranged from each other in mind, without perceiving it. The form of the ugly Coppelius, as Nathaniel himself was forced to confess, grew more dim in his fancy, and it often cost him trouble to color with sufficient liveliness in his pictures, when he appeared as a ghastly bugbear of fate. At last it struck him that he would make the gloomy foreboding, that Coppelius would destroy his happiness in love, the subject of a poem. He represented himself and Clara as united by true love; but occasionally it seemed as though a black hand darted into their life, and tore away some newly-springing joy. At last, while they were standing at the altar, the hideous Coppelius appeared, and touched Clara's lively eyes. They flashed into Nathaniel's heart, like bleeding sparks, scorching and burning, when Coppelius caught him, and flung him into a flaming fiery circle, which flew round with the swiftness of the stream, and carried him along with it, amid its roaring. The roar is like that of the hurricane, when it fiercely lashes the foaming waves, which, like black giants with white heads, rise up for the furious combat. But through the wild tumult he hears Clara's voice: "Can you not, then, see me? Coppelius has deceived you. Those, indeed, were not my eyes, which so burned in your breast—they were glowing drops of your own heart's blood. I have my eyes still—only look at them!" Nathaniel reflects: "That is Clara, and I am hers forever!" Then it seems to him as though thought forcibly entered the fiery circle, which stands still, while the noise dully ceases in the dark abyss. Nathaniel looks into Clara's eyes, but it is only death that, with Clara's eyes, kindly looks on him.

While Nathaniel composed this poem he was very calm and collected; he polished and improved every line, and having subjected himself to the fetters of metre, he did not rest till all was correct and melodious. When at last he had finished and read the poem aloud to himself, a wild horror seized him, and he cried out: "Whose horrible voice is that?" Soon, however, the whole appeared to him a very

successful work, and he felt that it must inflame Clara's cold temperament, although he did not clearly consider for what Clara was to be excited, nor what purpose it would answer to torment her with the frightful images which threatened a horrible destiny, destructive to their love. Both of them, that is to say, Nathaniel and Clara, were sitting in their mother's little garden, Clara very cheerful, because Nathaniel, during the three days in which he had been writing his poem, had not teased her with his dreams and his forebodings. Even Nathaniel spoke lively and joyfully about pleasant matters, as he used to do formerly, so that Clara said: "Now for the first time I have you again! Do you not see that we have driven away the ugly Coppeliuss?" Then it first struck Nathaniel that he had in his pocket the poem, which he had intended to read. He at once drew the sheets out and began, while Clara, expecting something tedious as usual, resigned herself and began quietly to knit. But as the dark cloud rose ever blacker and blacker, she let the stocking fall and looked full into his face. He was carried along unceasingly by his poem, and internal fire deeply reddened his cheeks, tears flowed from his eyes. At last, when he had concluded, he groaned in a state of utter exhaustion, and catching Clara's hand, sighed forth, as if melted into the most inconsolable grief:

"Oh Clara!—Clara!" Clara pressed him gently to her bosom, and said softly, but very solemnly and sincerely: "Nathaniel, dearest Nathaniel, do throw that mad, senseless, insane stuff into the fire!" Upon this Nathaniel sprang up enraged, and thrusting Clara from him, cried: "Thou inanimate, accursed automaton!" He ran off; Clara deeply offended, shed bitter tears, and sobbed aloud; "Ah, he has never loved me, for he does not understand me."

Lothaire entered the arbour; Clara was obliged to tell him all that had occurred. He loved his sister with all his soul, and every word of her complaint fell like a spark of fire into his heart, so that the indignation which he had long

harbored against the visionary Nathaniel, now broke out into the wildest rage. He ran to Nathaniel and reproached him for his senseless conduct towards his beloved sister, in hard words which the infuriated Nathaniel retorted in the same style. The appellation of "fantastical mad fool," was answered by that of "miserable common-place fellow." A duel was inevitable. They agreed on the following morning, according to the academical custom of the place, to fight with sharp rapiers behind the garden. Silently and gloomily they slunk about. Clara had overheard the violent dispute, and seeing the fencing-master bring the rapiers at dawn, guessed what was to occur. Having reached the place of combat, Lothaire and Nathaniel had, in gloomy silence, flung off their coats, and with the fierce desire of fighting in their flaming eyes, were about to fall upon one another, when Clara rushed through the garden door. Sobbing, she cried aloud, "Ye wild cruel men! Strike me down before you attack each other, for how shall I live longer in the world if my lover murders my brother, or my brother murders my lover." Lothaire lowered his weapon, and looked in silence on the ground; but in Nathaniel's heart, amid the most poignant sorrow, revived all the love for the beautiful Clara, which he had felt in the best days of his happy youth. The weapon fell from his hand, he threw himself at Clara's feet. "Can you ever forgive me, my only—my beloved Clara? Can you forgive me, my dear brother, Lothaire?"

Lothaire was touched by the deep contrition of his friend; all three embraced in reconciliation amid a thousand tears, and vowed eternal love and fidelity.

Nathaniel felt as though a heavy burden, which pressed him to the ground, had been rolled away, as though by resisting the dark power, which held him fast, he had saved his whole being, which had been threatened with annihilation. Three happy days he passed with his dear friends, and then went to G——, where he intended to stay a year, and then to return to his native town forever.

All that referred to Coppelius was kept a secret from the mother, for it was well known that she could not think of him without terror, as she, as well as Nathaniel, accused him of causing her husband's death.

How surprised was Nathaniel, when proceeding to his lodging, he saw that the whole house was burned down, and that only the bare walls stood up amid the ashes. However, notwithstanding the fire had broken out in the laboratory of the apothecary, who lived on the ground-floor, and had, therefore, consumed the house from bottom to top, some bold active friends had succeeded in entering Nathaniel's room in the upper story, in time to save the books, manuscripts, and instruments. They carried all safe and sound into another house, where they took a room which Nathaniel entered at once. He did not think it at all remarkable that he lodged opposite to Professor Spalanzani; neither did it appear singular when he perceived that his window looked straight into the room where Olympia often sat alone, so that he could plainly recognize her figure, although the features of her face were indistinct and confused. At last it struck him, that Olympia often remained for hours in this attitude, in which he had once seen her through the glass-door, sitting at a little table, without any occupation, and that she plainly enough looked over at him with an unvarying glance. He was forced to confess that he had never seen a more lovely form, but with Clara in his heart, the stiff Olympia was perfectly indifferent to him. Occasionally, to be sure, he gave a transient look over his compendium, at the beautiful statue, but that was all. He was just writing to Clara, when he heard a light tap at the door; it paused at his words, and the repulsive face of Coppola peeped in. Nathaniel's heart trembled within him, but remembering what Spalanzani had told him about the countryman, Coppola, and also the sacred promises he had made to Clara with respect to the Sandman Coppelius, he felt ashamed of his childish fear, and collecting himself

with all his might, and as softly and civilly as possible : “ I do not want a barometer, my good friend ; pray, go.”

Upon this, Coppola advanced a good way into the room, and said in a hoarse voice, while his wide mouth distorted itself into a hideous laugh, and his little eyes under their long gray lashes sparkled forth piercingly : “ Eh, eh—no barometer—no barometer ? I have besides, pretty eyes—pretty eyes ? ”

“ Madman ! ” cried Nathaniel, with horror, “ how can you have eyes ?—Eyes ? ”

But Coppola had already put his barometer aside, and plunged his hand into his wide coat-pocket, whence he drew lunettes and spectacles, which he placed on the table. “ There—there—spectacles on the nose, those are my eyes—pretty eyes ! ”

And so saying he drew out more and more spectacles, so that the whole table began to glisten and sparkle in the most extraordinary manner. A thousand eyes glanced, and quivered convulsively, and stared at Nathaniel ; yet he could not look away from the table, and Coppola kept still laying down more and more spectacles, while flaming glances were intermingled more and more wildly, and shot their blood-red rays into Nathaniel's breast. Overcome with horror, he shrieked out : “ Hold, hold, frightful man ! ” He seized fast by the arm Coppola, who was searching his pockets to bring out still more spectacles, although the whole table was already covered. Coppola had greatly extricated himself by a hoarse repulsive laugh, and with the words : “ Ah, nothing for you,—but here are pretty glasses ; ” he had collected all the spectacles, put them up, and from the breast-pocket of his coat had drawn forth a number of telescopes large and small. As soon as the spectacles were removed Nathaniel felt quite easy, and thinking of Clara, perceived that the hideous phantom was but the creation of his own mind, and that Coppola was an honest optician, and could by no means be the accursed double of Coppelius. Moreover, in all the glasses which Coppola now placed on the table, there was

nothing remarkable, or at least nothing so ghost-like as the spectacles, and to make matters right Nathaniel resolved to buy something of Coppola. He took up a little and very neatly worked pocket telescope, and looked through the window to try it. Never in his life had he met a glass which brought the objects so sharply, plainly and clearly before his eyes. Involuntarily he looked into Spalanzani's room; Olympia was sitting as usual before the little table, with her arms laid upon it, and her hands folded. For the first time could he see the wondrous beauty in the form of her face;—only the eyes seemed to him singularly stiff and dead. Nevertheless, as he looked more sharply through the glass, it seemed to him as if moist-born beams were rising in the eyes of Olympia. It was as if the power of seeing was kindled for the first time; the glances flashed with constantly increasing liveliness. As if spell-bound, Nathaniel reclined against the window, meditating on the charming Olympia. A hemming and scraping aroused him as if from a dream. Coppola was standing behind him: "*Tre zecchini*—three ducats!" Nathaniel, who had quite forgotten the optician, quickly paid him what he asked.

"Is it not so? A pretty glass—a pretty glass?" asked Coppola, in his hoarse, repulsive voice, and with his hoarse malicious smile. "Yes—yes," replied Nathaniel, peevishly; "good bye, friend."

Coppola left the room, not without casting many strange glances at Nathaniel. He heard him laugh loudly on the stairs. "Ah, thought Nathaniel, "he is laughing at me, because, no doubt, I have paid him too much for this little glass. While he softly uttered these words, it seemed to me as if a deep, deadly sigh was sounding fearfully through the room, and his breath was stopped by inward anguish. He perceived, however, that it was himself who had sighed. "Clara," he said to himself, "is right in taking me for a senseless dreamer, but it is pure madness—nay, more than madness, that the stupid thought, that I have paid Coppola

too much for the glass, pains me even so strangely. I cannot see the cause."

He now sat down to finish his letter to Clara; but a glance through the window convinced him that Olympia was still sitting there, and he instantly sprang out, as if impelled by an irresistible power, seized Coppola's glass, and could not tear himself from the seductive view of Olympia, till his friend and brother Sigismund, called him to go to Professor Spalanzani's lecture. The curtain was drawn close before the fatal room, and he could neither perceive Olympia now nor during the two following days, although he scarcely ever left the window, and constantly looked through Coppola's glass. On the third day the windows were completely covered. Quite in despair, and impelled by a burning wish, he ran out of the town-gate. Olympia's form floated before him in the air, stepped forth from the bushes, and peeped at him with large beaming eyes from the clear brook. Clara's image had completely vanished from his mind; he thought of nothing but Olympia, and complained aloud and in a murmuring tone: "Ah, thou noble, sublime star of my love, hast thou only risen upon me, to vanish immediately and leave me in dark hopeless night?"

When he was retiring to his lodging, he perceived that there was a great bustle in Spalanzani's house. The doors were wide open, all sorts of utensils were being carried in, the windows of the first floor were being taken out, maid servants were going about sweeping and dusting with great hair-brooms, and carpenters and upholsterers were knocking and hammering within. Nathaniel remained standing in the street in a state of perfect wonder, when Sigismund came up to him, laughing, and said:

"Now, what do you say to our old Spalanzani?"—Nathaniel assured him that he could say nothing, because he knew nothing about the professor, but on the contrary perceived with astonishment, the mad proceedings in a house otherwise so quiet and gloomy. He then learnt from Sigis-

mund that Spalanzani intended to give a grand festival on the following day,—a concert and ball—and that half the university was invited. It was generally reported that Spalanzani, who had so long kept his daughter most painfully from every human eye, would now let her appear for the first time.

Nathaniel found a card of invitation, and with heart beating highly, went at the appointed hour to the professor's, where the coaches were already rolling, and the lights were shining in the decorated saloons. The company was numerous and brilliant. Olympia appeared dressed with richness and taste. Her beautifully turned face, her figure called for admiration. The somewhat strange bend of her back inwards, the wasp-like thinness of her waist, seemed to be produced by too tight lacing. In her step and deportment there was something measured and stiff, which struck many as unpleasant, but it was ascribed to the constraint produced by the company. The concert began. Olympia played the piano with great dexterity, and executed a bravura, with a voice like the sound of a glass bell, clear, and almost cutting. Nathaniel was quite enraptured; he stood in the hindermost row, and could not perfectly recognize Olympia's features in the dazzling light. He, therefore, quite unperceived, took out Coppola's glass, and looked towards the fair Olympia. Ah! then he saw with what a longing glance she looked towards him, how every tone first resolved itself plainly in the glance of love, which penetrated, in its glowing career, his inmost soul. The artistical *roulades* seemed to Nathaniel the exultation of a mind illuminated with love, and when, at last, after the cadence, the long thrill sounded shrilly through the saloon, he felt as if grasped by glowing arms; he could no longer restrain himself, but with mingled pain and rapture shouted out "Olympia!" All looked at him, and many laughed. The organist of the cathedral made a more gloomy face than usual, and simply said: "Well, well." The concert had finished, the ball began. "To dance with her—with her!"

That was the aim of all Nathaniel's wishes, of all his efforts;

but how to gain courage to ask her, the queen of the festival? Nevertheless—he himself did not know how it happened—no sooner had the dancing begun, than he was standing close to Olympia, who had not yet been asked to dance, and scarcely able to stammer out a few words, had seized her hand. The hand of Olympia was as cold as ice; he felt a horrible deadly frost thrilling through him. He looked into her eye—that was beaming full of love and desire, and at the same time it seemed to him as though the pulse began to beat, and the stream of life to glow in the cold hand. And in the soul of Nathaniel the joy of love rose still higher; he clasped the beautiful Olympia, and with her flew through the dance. He thought that his dancing was usually correct as to time, but the peculiar rhythmical steadiness with which Olympia moved, and which often put him completely out, soon showed him, that his time was very defective. However, he would dance with no other lady, and would have liked to murder any one who approached Olympia for the purpose of asking her. But this only happened twice, and to his astonishment Olympia remained seated after every dance, when he lost no time in making her rise again. Had he been able to see any other object besides the fair Olympia, all sorts of unfortunate quarrels would have been inevitable, for the half-soft, scarcely-suppressed laughter, which arose among the young people in every corner, was manifestly directed to Olympia, whom they pursued with very curious glances—one could not tell why. Heated by the dance, and by the wine, of which he had freely partaken, Nathaniel had laid aside all his ordinary reserve.—He sat by Olympia, with her hand in his, and highly inflamed and inspired, told his passion, in words which no one understood—neither himself nor Olympia. Yet, perhaps, *she* did; for she looked immovably in his face, and sighed several times, “Ah, ah!” Upon this, Nathaniel said, “Oh, thou splendid, heavenly lady! Thou ray from the promised land of love—thou deep soul, in which all my being is reflected!” with much more stuff of the like kind; but Olympia merely

went on sighing, "Ah—ah!" Professor Spalanzani occasionally passed the happy pair, and smiled on them with a look of singular satisfaction. To Nathaniel, although he felt in quite another region, it seemed all at once as though Professor Spalanzani was growing considerably darker; he looked around, and, to his no small horror, perceived that the two last candles in his empty saloon had burned down to their sockets, and were just going out. Music and dancing had ceased long ago.

"Separation, separation!" he cried, wildly, and in despair; he kissed Olympia's hand, he bent towards her mouth, when his glowing lips were met by lips cold as ice! Just as when he touched Olympia's cold hand, he felt himself overcome by horror; the legend of the dead bride darted suddenly through his mind, but Olympia pressed him fast, and her lips seemed to recover to life at his kiss. Professor Spalanzani strode through the empty hall, his steps caused a hollow echo, and his figure, round which a flickering shadow played, had a fearful, spectral appearance. "Dost thou love me, dost thou love me, Olympia? Only this word!—Dost thou love me?" So whispered Nathaniel; but Olympia, as she rose, only sighed, "Ah—ah!" "Yes, my gracious, my beautiful star of love," said Nathaniel, "thou hast risen upon me, and thou wilt shine, ever illuminating my inmost soul." "Ah—ah!" replied Olympia, going. Nathaniel followed her, and they both stood before the Professor.

"You have had a very animated conversation with my daughter," said he, smiling; "so dear Herr Nathaniel, if you have any taste for talking with a silly girl, your visits shall be welcome."

Nathaniel departed, with a whole heaven beaming in his bosom. The next day Spalanzani's festival was the subject of conversation. Notwithstanding the professor had done everything to appear splendid, the wags had all sorts of incongruities and other oddities to talk about, and were particularly hard upon the dumb, stiff Olympia, to whom, in spite

of her beautiful exterior, they ascribed absolute stupidity, and were pleased to find therein the cause why Spalanzani kept her so long concealed. Nathaniel did not hear this without increased rage ; but, nevertheless, he held his peace, for, thought he, " Is it worth while to convince these fellows that it is their own stupidity that prevents them from recognizing Olympia's deep, noble mind ? "

One day Sigismund said to him : " Be kind enough, brother, to tell me how it was possible for a sensible fellow like you to fall in love with that wax face, that wooden doll up there ? "

Nathaniel was about to fly out in a passion, but he quickly recollected himself, and retorted : " Tell me, Sigismund, how it is that Olympia's heavenly charms could escape your glance, which generally perceives everything so clearly—your active senses ? But, for that very reason, Heaven be thanked, I have not you for my rival ; otherwise, one of us must have fallen a bleeding corpse ! "

Sigismund plainly perceived his friend's condition, so he skilfully gave the conversation a turn, and added, after observing that in love affairs there was no disputing about the object : " Nevertheless it is strange, that many of us think much the same about Olympia. To us—pray do not take it ill, brother,—she appears singularly stiff and soulless. Her shape is symmetrical—so is her face—that is true ! She might pass for beautiful, if her glance were not so utterly without a ray of life—without the power of seeing. Her pace is strangely measured, every movement seems to depend on some wound-up clockwork. Her playing—her singing has the unpleasantly correct and spiritless measure of a singing machine, and the same may be said of her dancing. To us, this Olympia has been quite unpleasant ; we wished to have nothing to do with her ; it seems as if she acts like a living being, and yet has some strange peculiarity of her own. "

Nathaniel did not completely yield to the bitter feeling, which was coming over him at these words of Sigismund ; he

mastered his indignation, and merely said, with great earnestness, "Well may Olympia appear awful to you, cold prosaic man. Only to the poetical mind does the similarly organized develope itself. To me alone was her glance of love revealed, beaming through mind and thought; only in the love of Olympia do I find myself again. / It may not suit you, that she does not indulge in idle chitchat like other shallow minds. She utters few words, it is true, but these few words appear as genuine hieroglyphics of the inner world, full of love and deep knowledge of the spiritual life in contemplation of the eternal *yonder*. But you have no sense for all this, and my words are wasted on you."

"God preserve you, brother," said Sigismund very mildly, almost sorrowfully; "but it seems to me, that you are in an evil way. You may depend upon me, if all—no, no, I will not say any thing further." All of a sudden it seemed to Nathaniel as if the cold prosaic Sigismund meant very well towards him, and, therefore, he shook the proffered hand very heartily.

Nathaniel had totally forgotten that there was in the world a Clara, whom he had once loved;—his mother—Lothaire—all had vanished from his memory; he lived only for Olympia, with whom he sat for hours every day, uttering strange fantastical stuff about his love, about the sympathy that glowed to life, about the affinity of souls, to all of which Olympia listened with great devotion. From the very bottom of his desk, he drew out all that he had ever written. Poems, fantasies, visions, romances, tales—this stock was daily increased with all sorts of extravagant sonnets, stanzas, and *canzone*, and he read all to Olympia for hours in succession without fatigue. Never had he known such an admirable listener. She neither embroidered nor knitted, she never looked out of window, she fed no favorite bird, she played neither with lap-dog nor pet-cat, she did not twist a slip of paper nor any thing else in her hand, she was not obliged to suppress a yawn by a gentle forced cough. In short, she sat

for hours, looking straight into her lover's eyes, without stirring, and her glance became more and more lively and animated. Only when Nathaniel rose at last, and kissed her hand and also her lips, she said, "Ah—ah!" adding "good night, dearest!"

"Oh deep, noble mind," cried Nathaniel in his own room, "by thee, by thee, dear one, am I fully comprehended." He trembled with inward transport, when he considered the wonderful accordance that was revealed more and more every day in his own mind, and that of Olympia, for it seemed to him as if Olympia had spoken concerning him and his poetical talent, out of the depths of his own mind;—as if the voice had actually sounded from within himself. That must indeed have been the case, for Olympia never uttered any words whatever, beyond those which have been already mentioned. Even when Nathaniel, in clear and sober moments, as for instance, when he had just woken in the morning, remembered Olympia's utter passivity, and her paucity and scarcity of words, he said: "Words, words! The glance of her heavenly eye speaks more than any language here below. Can a child of heaven adapt herself to the narrow circle which a miserable earthly necessity has drawn?"

Professor Spalanzani appeared highly delighted at the intimacy of his daughter with Nathaniel. To the latter he gave the most unequivocal signs of approbation, and when Nathaniel ventured at last to hint at an union with Olympia, he smiled with his white face, and thought "he would leave his daughter a free choice in the matter."

Encouraged by these words, and with burning passion in his heart, Nathaniel resolved to implore Olympia on the very next day, that she would say directly, in plain words, that which her kind glance had told him long ago; namely, that she loved him. He sought the ring which his mother had given him at parting, that he might give it to Olympia as a symbol of his devotion, of his life which budded forth and bloomed with her alone. Clara's letter and Lothaire's came

into his hands during the search ; but he flung them aside indifferently, found the ring, put it up, and hastened over to Olympia.

Already on the steps, in the hall, he heard a strange noise, which seemed to proceed from Spalanzani's room. There was a stamping, a clattering, a pushing, a hurling against the door, intermingled with curses and imprecations.

“ Let go, let go, rascal !—scoundrel ! Body and soul ventured in it ? Ha, ha, ha ! that I never will consent to—I, made the eyes, I the clockwork—stupid blockhead with your clockwork—accursed dog of a bungling watch-maker—off with you—Satan—stop, pipe-maker—infernal beast—hold—begone—let go ! ”

These words were uttered by the voices of Spalanzani, and the hideous Coppelius, who was thus raging and clamoring. Nathaniel rushed in, overcome by the most inexpressible anguish. The professor held a female figure fast by the shoulders, the Italian Coppola grasped it by the feet, and thus they were tugging and pulling, this way and that, contending for the possession of it, with the utmost fury. Nathaniel started back with horror, when in the figure he recognized Olympia. Boiling with the wildest indignation, he was about to rescue his beloved from these infuriated men, but at that moment Coppola, turning himself with the force of a giant, wrenched the figure from the professor's hand, and then with the figure itself gave him a tremendous blow, which made him reel and fall backwards over the table, where vials, retorts, bottles and glass cylinders were standing. All these were dashed to a thousand shivers. Now Coppola flung the figure across his shoulders, and, with frightful, yelling laughter, dashed down the stairs, so that the feet of the figure, which dangled in the ugliest manner, rattled with a wooden sound on every step. Nathaniel stood paralyzed ; he had seen but too plainly that Olympia's waxen, deadly pale countenance had no eyes, but black holes instead—she was, indeed, a lifeless doll. Spalanzani was writhing on the floor ; the

pieces of glass had cut his head, hands and arms, and the blood was spirting up, as from so many fountains. But he soon collected all his strength.

"After him—after him—why do you pause? Coppelius, Coppelius, has robbed me of my best automaton—a work of twenty years—body and soul set upon it—the clock-work—the speech—the walk, mine; the eyes stolen from you. The infernal rascal—after him; fetch Olympia—there you have the eyes!"

And now Nathaniel saw how a pair of eyes, which lay upon the ground, were staring at him; these Spalanzani caught up, with the unwounded hand, and flung against his heart. At this, madness seized him with its burning claws, and clutched into his soul, tearing to pieces all his thoughts and senses.

"Ho—ho—ho—a circle of fire! of fire!—turn thyself round, circle, merrily, merrily, ho, thou wooden doll—turn thyself, pretty doll!"

With these words he flew at the professor and pressed in his throat. He would have strangled him, had not the noise attracted many people, who rushed in, forced open Nathaniel's grasp, and thus saved the professor, whose wounds were bound immediately. Sigismund, as strong as he was, was not able to master the mad Nathaniel, who, with frightful voice kept crying out: "Turn thyself, wooden doll!" and struck around him with clenched fists. At last the combined force of many succeeded in overcoming him, in flinging him to the ground, and binding him. His words were merged into a hideous roar, like that of a brute, and raging in this insane condition he was taken to the mad-house.

Before, gentle reader, I proceed to tell thee what more befel the unfortunate Nathaniel, I can tell thee, in case thou takest an interest in the skilful optician and automaton-maker, Spalanzani, that he was completely healed of his wounds. He was, however, obliged to leave the university, because Nathaniel's story had created a sensation, and it was universally

deemed an unpardonable imposition to smuggle wooden dolls instead of living persons into respectable tea-parties—for such Olympia had visited with success. The lawyers called it a most subtle deception, and the more culpable, inasmuch as he had planned it so artfully against the public, that not a single soul—a few cunning students excepted—had detected it, although all now wished to play the acute, and referred to various facts which appeared to them suspicious. Nothing very clever was revealed in this way. For instance, could it strike any one as so very suspicious, that Olympia, according to the expression of an elegant tea-ite, had, contrary to all usage, sneezed oftener than she had yawned!

“The *former*,” remarked this elegant person, “was the self-winding-up of the concealed clockwork, which had, moreover, creaked audibly”—and so on. The professor of poetry and eloquence took a pinch of snuff, clapped first the lid of his box, cleared his throat, and said, solemnly, “Ladies and gentlemen, do you not perceive how the whole affair lies? It is all an allegory—a continued metaphor—you understand me—*Sapienti sat.*”

But many were not satisfied with this; the story of the automaton had struck deep root into their souls, and, in fact, an abominable mistrust against human figures in general, began to creep in. Many lovers, to be quite convinced that they were not enamored of wooden dolls, would request their mistress to sing and dance a little out of time, to embroider and knit, and play with their lap-dogs, while listening, &c. ; and, above all, not to listen merely, but also sometimes to talk, in such a manner as presupposed actual thought and feeling.

With many did the bond of love become firmer, and more chaining, while others, on the contrary, slipped gently out of the noose.

“One cannot really answer for this,” said some. At tea-parties, yawning prevailed to an incredible extent, and there was no sneezing at all, that all suspicion might be avoided.

Spalanzani, as already stated, was obliged to decamp, to escape the criminal prosecution for fraudulently introducing an automaton into human society. Coppola had vanished also.

Nathaniel awakened as from a heavy, frightful dream; he opened his eyes and felt an indescribable sensation of pleasure streaming through him, with soft heavenly warmth. He was in bed in his own room, in his father's house, Clara stooping over him, and Lothaire and his mother were standing near.

"At last, at last, oh beloved Nathaniel, hast thou recovered from thy serious illness—now thou art again mine!"

So spoke Clara, from the very depth of her soul, and clasped Nathaniel in her arms. But with mingled sorrow and delight did the brightly glowing tears fall from his eyes, and he deeply groaned forth: "My own—my own Clara!" Sigismund, who had faithfully remained with his friend in the hour of trouble, now entered. Nathaniel stretched out his hand to him.

"And thou, faithful brother, hast not deserted me?"

Every trace of Nathaniel's madness had vanished, and he soon gained strength amid the care of his mother, his beloved, and his friends. Good fortune also had visited the house, for an old penurious uncle, of whom nothing had been expected, had died, and had left the mother, besides considerable property, an estate in a pleasant spot near the town. Thither Nathaniel, with his Clara, whom he now thought of marrying, his mother, and Lothaire, desired to go. Nathaniel had now grown milder and more docile than he had ever been, and he now understood, for the first time, the heavenly purity and the greatness of Clara's mind.—No one, by the slightest hint, reminded him of the past. Only, when Sigismund took leave of him, Nathaniel said:

"Heavens, brother, I was in an evil way, but a good angel led me betimes to the path of light. Ah, that was Clara!"

Sigismund did not let him carry the discourse further, for fear that deeply wounding recollections might burst forth

bright and flaming. It was about this time that the four happy persons thought of going to the estate. They were crossing, at noon, the streets of the city, where they had made several purchases, and the high steeple of the town-house already cast its gigantic shadow over the market-place.

“ Oh,” said Clara, “ let us ascend it once more, and look at the distant mountains ! ”

No sooner said than done. Nathaniel and Clara both ascended the steps, the mother returned home with the servant, and Lothaire, not inclined to clamber up so many steps, remained below. The two lovers stood arm in arm in the highest gallery of the tower, and looked down upon the misty forest, behind which the blue mountains were rising like a gigantic city.

“ Look there at that curious little gray bush, which actually seems as if it were striding towards us,” said Clara. Nathaniel mechanically put his hand into his breast pocket—he found Coppola’s telescope, and he looked on one side. Clara was before the glass. There was a convulsive movement in his pulse and veins,—pale as death, he stared at Clara, but soon streams of fire flashed and glared from his rolling eyes, and he roared frightfully, like a hunted beast. Then he sprang high into the air, and, in the intervals of a horrible laughter, shrieked out, in a piercing tone, “ Wooden doll, turn thyself ! ”

Seizing Clara with immense force, he wished to hurl her down, but with the energy of a desperate death-struggle she clutched the railings. Lothaire heard the raging of the madman—he heard Clara’s shriek of agony—fearful forebodings darted through his mind, he ran up, the door of the second flight was fastened, and the shrieks of Clara became louder and louder. Frantic with rage and anxiety, he dashed against the door, which, at last, burst open. Clara’s voice became fainter and fainter. “ Help—help—save me ! ”—with these words the voice seemed to die in the air.

“ She is gone—murdered by the madman ! ” cried Lothaire. The door of the gallery was also closed, but despair gave

him a giant's strength, and he burst it from the hinges. Heavens—Clara, grasped by the mad Nathaniel, was hanging in the air over the gallery, only with one hand she still held one of the iron railings. Quick as lightning Lothaire caught his sister, drew her in, and, at the same moment, struck the madman in the face with his clenched fist, so that he reeled and let go his prey.

Lothaire ran down with his fainting sister in his arms. She was saved. Nathaniel went raging about the gallery and bounded high in the air, crying, "Fire circle—turn thyself!" The people collected at the sound of the wild shriek, and among them, prominent by his gigantic stature, was the advocate Coppelius, who had just come to the town, and was proceeding straight to the market-place. Some wished to ascend and secure the madman, but Coppelius laughed, saying "Ha, ha,—only wait—he will soon come down of his own accord," and looked up like the rest. Nathaniel suddenly stood still, as if petrified; he stooped down, perceived Coppelius, and yelling out, "Ah, pretty eyes—pretty eyes!" he sprang over the railing.

When Nathaniel lay on the stone pavement, with his head shattered, Coppelius had disappeared in the crowd.

Many years afterwards it is said that Clara was seen in a remote spot, sitting hand in hand with a kind-looking man before the door of a country house, while two lively boys played before her. From this it may be inferred that she at last found that quiet domestic happiness which suited her serene and cheerful mind, and which the morbid Nathaniel would never have given her.

*Signor Tommaso Scarpone. Under
theil, Tempel ed. vol. IV, p. 16 ff.*

SALVATOR ROSA.

AT the time when the fisherman, Massaniello proclaimed by the sound of the tocsin, liberty in Naples, the painter Salvator, driven from the city by the terror which this eight days' revolution occasioned, fled, destitute of everything, and took the road to Rome. He wore a costume of humble appearance, and two poor sequins, well worn, clinked in the bottom of his almost empty purse, when he arrived, towards dark, at the gates of Rome, the same day that witnessed the death of Massaniello, and Naples return to the yoke of Spain. He slipped like a shadow through the deserted streets, until he reached the Navona Square. It was there that, in happier times, he had lived in a beautiful house, near the Pamfili palace. His gaze was fixed, with all the anguish of a sad remembrance, on the high windows which reflected the brilliancy of the full moon.

"Alas!" said he to himself, I shall have to expend much time in producing paintings before I shall be able to regain my favorite studio!"

This thought agitated him with a painful shudder; then, his strength being nearly exhausted suddenly failed him, and, sinking down on a stone seat, before the regretted house, he exclaimed:

"How many pictures must I daub, in order to live, and satisfy the caprice of fools? I feel no longer courage, or confidence in the future!"

A frozen wind whirled whistling through the deserted streets. Salvator soon felt the necessity of seeking for an asylum; and, dragging himself as far as the corner of Bergognona street, near the Corso, he stopped before a silent little house, with two windows, in which lived a poor widow with her two daughters. This family had made a home for him at the time of his first visit to Rome, when he was nothing but a poor unknown artist. Salvator hoped that this remembrance would procure him a kindly welcome. He knocked for a long time without being able to make himself heard; finally the widow, suddenly awaking, came gropingly and half opened the window, grumbling with her whole soul against the belated individual who came to disturb her repose at this hour of the night; but as soon as Salvator, after many words wholly lost, thanks to the state of half slumber in which the lady was wrapped, had succeeded in making himself recognized—

“What is it!” exclaimed his old hostess, “what, is that you, master Salvator? You are very welcome; your little chamber has remained empty, and the fig-tree which grew up against the wall, now encloses the window in its fresh foliage. My good friend, how happy my daughters will be to see you again! You will no longer recognize my dear Margaret, she has grown so tall and handsome! and your favorite cat, alas! she, three months ago choked herself with a fish-bone. We are all mortal! And our fat neighbor, whom you so well caricatured, has married a Signor Luigi, a young man.—Heaven be praised for all; but singular marriages are arranged up above.”

“But,” interrupted Salvator, with great exertion, “for heaven’s sake, Madame Catherine, open the door for me at once, then we will talk at our ease about the fig-tree, your daughter, the cat and the fat neighbor. I am dying of fatigue and hunger.”

“Well, well!” said the old lady, grumblingly, “patience, I am coming.”

Then it took her a good quarter of an hour to find the key

of the door, awaken the girls, and light a fire. The door was finally opened to the poor traveller, who took three steps inside the door and fainted with exhaustion. The good lady Catherine loved Salvator, and placed his talents far above those of other painters. The accident of her old lodger caused her extreme pain, and she cried out for them to quickly seek a confessor. By chance, her son, who ordinarily worked at Tivoli, was in the house that night. This young man thought that a physician was more necessary than a confessor, and he ran to the Place d'Espagne to beg the doctor Splendiano Accoramboni to come immediately to the artist, whom they had swaddled up in a very warm bed. The good Catherine sprinkled him with holy water, and surrounded him with holy relics, whilst the young girls, bathed in tears, endeavored to pour through the lips of the sick man some drops of an old cordial. Day began to break when the doors were thrown open, to allow the famous doctor to pass. The young girls discreetly retired, not without throwing on poor Salvator uneasy glances.

It is not, perhaps, useless to describe the new character who makes his appearance on the stage at the little house in Bergognona street. In spite of all the natural dispositions towards the most perfect physical developement, doctor Splendiano Accoramboni had not been able to exceed the respectable height of four feet. It is yet truth to tell that in his childhood he had given promises of acquiring the finest proportions; and before his head became a little deformed by I know not what accident, had acquired, thanks to his puffy cheeks and his double chin, an exaggerated volume; before his nose had become violet by the corrosive action of the Spanish tobacco; before his paunch, swelled with maccaroni, had attained uncomfortable dimensions, the celebrated doctor Splendiano very advantageously wore the costume of an abbot. He was, to tell the truth, such a pretty young man, that the old Roman ladies, who petted him, rivalled each other in calling him a duck, their dear little fellow. This

nick-name had made his fortune, and a German painter said, cunningly, on seeing Signor Splendiano pass through the Place d'Espagne, that he seemed like an Alcides of gigantic stature, and at least six feet high, with the head of a puppet. This strange figure was rolled up in an immense piece of Venice damask with large figures; a belt of buffalo skin, buckled over his chest, supported a rapier at least three ells in length, and on his powdered wig swayed a high and pointed cap, which resembled not a little the obelisk of Saint Peter's Square; and this frizzled wig, which, on account of the small stature of the wearer, reached the middle of his back, represented a kind of cocoon, from which this enormous silk-worm projected half way.

Splendiano put on his spectacles to observe the sick man, and taking dame Catherine aside:—"He is very ill," said he in a low voice; "the esteemed painter, Salvator Rosa, will give up the ghost in your house, if my science does not preserve him. When did he arrive? Does he bring any fine pictures to Naples?"

"Alas! my worthy Signor," said the old lady, "the poor fellow came very suddenly upon me to-night: as for the pictures of which you speak, I have seen nothing of them; but there is down below a great box that Salvator had recommended to my care before falling into the state in which you see him." Catherine lied, but we shall soon see on what account.

"Ho, ho!" said the doctor, smacking his lips and smiling through his beard; then, with all the gravity which his long rapier would allow him to assume, whilst it caught against every piece of furniture, he approached the sick man and felt his pulse with a knowing look, breathing like a smith's bellows in the silence that surrounded him. After having declined in Greek and Latin, the odd names of more than a hundred diseases which the painter had not, he added that he could not *ex abrupto* denominate that from which Salvator was suffering, but that he should not be long in finding a very remarkable name, and very efficacious remedies. Having

said that, he went away with measured steps, as he had come ; but at the foot of the staircase the box came into his mind, and, pressed with questions, dame Catherine showed him an old chest in which reposed some garments of her departed husband. The doctor sounded the chest with his foot and went out, repeating, " We shall see."

When the good widow went back to the little chamber, Salvator began to give some signs of life. The young girls had come stealthily back, and stood, like two guardian angels, at his bedside. There was a delicious poetry in the joy of this poor family, when the pale face of the artist appeared to grow animated under the rays of the rising sun.

Mother, said the young girls in a low voice, " God will save our good friend Salvator ; why then has this ugly doctor, whose face is repulsive, and whose words are fearful, been called ? "

" Silence, young people," answered Catherine, " it is fortunate for us that the wise Splendiano has not disdained to come to our humble dwelling, for he is the fashionable physician amongst great lords ; and if, thanks to him, master Salvator recovers his health, he will paint some fine picture to pay him for it ; Splendiano is a generous man who treats artists like brothers."

" When he does not bury them ! " said the young girls, softly ; and their eyes sought again on the features of the painter the first indications of his awaking from this fatal fainting fit. When Salvator opened his eyes, an almost imperceptible smile of affectionate gratitude to the good hearts that had not abandoned him, lightly contracted his lips ; he was, perhaps, about to speak, but a delicate white hand was placed upon his mouth, whilst a sweet voice said softly to him, " Hope and courage ! "

Some minutes afterwards, Splendiano re-appeared, loaded with several phials filled with a detestable drug, which he prescribed to be administered to his patient ; but either the

disease progressed, or the remedy was worse than the disease, Salvator was making his way slowly towards the other world.

Poor Catherine passed the whole night in praying to the Madonna and all the saints in heaven to aid her old lodger, and not allow him to die so young and with so promising a future before him. The young girls, in despair, accused the doctor's medicines, and uttered plaintive cries at each convulsion of the sick man, who had become delirious. This scene of tears and terror lasted until broad day. Suddenly in an attack of fever, Salvator furiously sprang from the bed, seized all the phials one after the other, and threw them out of the window. The wise Splendiano, who was then entering the house, was copiously inundated with the stinking fluid in the phials, which broke on his head. He ran, squalling strangely : " Master Salvator has become mad ! in ten minutes he is a dead man ! Give me the picture, dame Catherine ! I will have it immediately, to pay for my visits ! "

The old lady opened the chest without saying a word ; but when the doctor saw the rags with which it was filled, his eyes, fringed with scarlet, became inflamed with anger ; he stamped his foot, gritted his teeth, and, devoting the whole house in Bergognona street to all the devils in h—, he flew like a bomb-shell, violently driven from a mortar by an explosion.

When the fever had left him, Salvator fell back into a state of insensibility again. The good Catherine believing that he was going, ran to the neighboring monastery to seek for father Bonifazio to administer the last sacraments to him. But at the sight of the sick man, the reverend man guessed that his ministry was not yet in season, and that the artist, with judicious care, might escape from it, provided that the door should be immediately shut against the doctor. Wiser remedies soon reëstablished an equilibrium in the organs of the sick man. When he opened his eyes again, his first glance fell upon a young man of distinguished exterior, who threw himself on his knees at his bedside, and exclaimed, weeping with joy :

“ Oh my excellent, my illustrious master, you are saved ! ”

“ Where am I ? ” murmured Salvator. But the young man, begging him not to speak in his present state of weakness, hastened to anticipate his questions.

“ You were sick on arriving from Naples here ; but thanks to God, simple remedies and devoted care would soon have put you on your feet again, if chance had not delivered you into the hands of doctor Pyramid, who was taking strong measures to consign you to the ground ! ”

“ Who is this,” said Salvator, “ who is this doctor Pyramid ? Is he not a kind of monkey whom I caught sight of during my delirium, and who seemed to wear upon his head the obelisk of Saint Peter’s Square ? ”

“ Would to God,” replied the young man, “ the name of Pyramid came from his head-dress ! You do not know that this infernal doctor has a monomania for pictures, and that he uses, to augment his gallery, quite a new proceeding ? Misfortune to painters, above all foreigners, whom the chance of a bad digestion, or the consequences of an orgie place in his hands ; he muffles them up in a disease of his own invention, the danger of which is wholly in his remedies. Under a fine air of disinterestedness, he stipulates for a picture as the price of his cure, and he is often the heir of the unfortunates whom he hastens to the cemetery in the neighborhood of the Pyramid of Cestius. That is the field in which the doctor Splendiano Accoramboni sows and reaps, surnamed Pyramid by those who escape from his claws. Dame Catherine, who is not rich, had made him believe that you brought a magnificent picture from Naples, and the hope of becoming possessor of it stimulated the zeal of this executioner. Very fortunate for you, in your delirium you broke over his head his poisonous phials, and, believing you in extremity, dame Catherine called in father Bonifazio, to whom I owe the happiness of being near you. We combatted, by a moderate bleeding, the inflammation of your blood, then we brought you to this little chamber which you formerly occupied. Here, here is your

easel, and several sketches that dame Catherine kept as relics of you. You will return to health, to glory ; this is more than is necessary for the happiness of your poor servant Antonia Scacciati, who desired nothing so much as to see once in his life the celebrated Salvator Rosa ! ”

“ I cannot guess,” said Salvator, “ what motives animate the affectionate sentiments that you express towards me.”

“ Permit me,” continued the young man, “ to still keep silence ; but when you are recovered, I will confide to you a great secret.”

“ Dispose of me,” replied Salvator, “ for I know not the face of a man that I have contemplated with more interest than yours ; the more I look at you, the more I seem to find in your features resemblance to those of the divine Sanzio ! ”

At these words, his eyes flashed like lightning, but he did not answer. The good Catherine entered the little chamber, followed by father Bonifazio, who offered Salvator an excellent strengthening cordial.

A very few days after, our artist, perfectly recovered, took up his pencil again and drew several sketches, which he proposed executing in oil. Antonio very seldom quitted him ; he was present during his hours of labor, and often made observations which announced very advanced practical notions.

“ Listen,” said Salvator to him, one day, “ you understand too well the rules of the art to allow me not to believe that you have yourself handled the pencil.”

“ Remember, my dear master,” answered Antonio, that I spoke to you during your illness, of a secret that consumes my heart ; the time seems to have come for me to open my mind to you. Why should I conceal from you that Antonio Scacciati, the poor surgeon who, God aiding, saved your life, burns like yourself with the most ardent love for art ? ”

“ Truly, think well of it, dear Antonio, from skilful surgeon that you are, do not become a moderate painter ; are you not a little too old for a study which would require a whole lifetime ? ”

"Ought I to tell you," continued Scacciati, "that I have worked at it from my earliest youth, and that in spite of all the opposition of my father, I have already been with several great artists? Annibal Carracci has advised me, and I confess myself the pupil of Guido Reni."

"In that case," exclaimed Salvator, in a voice slightly moved, and through which appeared a little irony, "if you are, as I believe, the worthy pupil to such high talent, how can you find in my humble paintings the least merit?"

Antonio's face became scarlet; but he continued quickly: "Allow me to tell you all. I have never, I swear to you, venerated the talent of any master so much as I have done yours; I admire the sublime elevation of ideas which breathes in your works. You know how to bring to light the most secret beauties of nature, you read in her mysterious books; you understand her voice, and you depict her to the life on the canvas!"

"A thousand thanks," interrupted Salvator, "you repeat those fine words to me after the manner of the jealous, who abandon landscape to me in order to make room for themselves in the historic style. In effect, have I the least knowledge in the world of how to sketch the human figure!"

"For heaven's sake, master, do not be angry; the real painters in Rome would be too happy to copy after you! No, the vulgar term landscape cannot be applied to your pictures; they are living scenes from which the thoughts spring in luminous features, which attest the independence of a creation, even when you seem to imitate nature. That is the sign of true genius, as Guido Reni and Pietri the Calabrian say, painters who know how to work conscientiously!"

Salvator listened to the young man in astonishment. When he had ended, he threw himself into his arms.

"You have just spoken," said he, "with an understanding of art much superior to that of many false artists who praise the vulgar. Whilst listening to you, it seemed to me that my genius revealed itself to me! Be my friend, Scacciati,

for my soul has just opened itself to your own. Come and show me the pictures on which you have worked in secret."

Antonio led him into his studio. Salvator examined the work for a long time, then he broke the silence:—"Young man, there is no mediocrity here, and you have received from heaven the vocation of an artist; but time and practice are requisite before you can attain the perfection of your masters. I will not tell you that you possess the delicate touch of Guido nor the vigor of Annibal; but, certainly, you leave far behind our colorists of the Academy of San-Luca, the Tiarini, les Gessi, the Sementa and many others, comprising Lanfranco, who only knows how to paint frescoes. But, yet, dear Antonio, I should still hesitate, in your place, between the lancet and the pencil. Art, do you see, becomes every day more ungrateful, and the devil is making war upon us! If you have not the resolution to submit to all kinds of affronts, injustice, and disgust,—for the more talent you have, the more envious and false friends you will have,—if you have not the strength of the martyrs, believe me, you had better give up the art. Remember the fate of the great Annibal, your master, whom the baseness of his enviers deprived of the fruits of his great labors, and who died poor in prime of life; remember our Dominiquin and the Cupola of Saint Janvier! Two cowardly rivals, Belisario and Ribera, did they not bribe his servant to mix ashes with his lime, so that his painting, deprived of temper, fell in scales under his despairing hand! Take care, Antonio, measure well your strength; for as soon as your courage fails, talent dies."

"I accept the struggle!" exclaimed Scacciati with an inspired voice; "and since you have proclaimed me painter, it is in you that I place my trust. You can by a word place me in the position which belongs to me."

"You have faith in me," said Salvator. "Well, I will sustain you with all my heart."

Saying this, he looked over the paintings of Scacciati again, and stopping before a Magdalen at the feet of the Saviour:—

“Here,” continued he, “you have strayed from your subject. Your Magdalen is not the penitent sinner, she is more like a graceful child, such as Guido might have created. This charming face breathes with the magic of inspiration, and I am much mistaken if the original of this Magdalen is not to be found in Rome. Confess, Antonio, that you are in love !”

The young man lowered his eyes, and answered hesitatingly :—“Nothing then escapes from your observation ? You have surprised my secret, but do not condemn me ! Yes, I like that picture above all, and until to-day I have carefully kept it from sight.”

“What !” exclaimed Salvator, “have none of our painters seen that canvas ?”

“I swear it to you !”

“In that case, you will soon be revenged on the rivals who wish to discourage you. Will you immediately carry that picture to my house, and leave the rest to me ?”

“I will do so, master, and you shall afterwards listen to the story of my love, and you will give me advice and assistance ?”

“Now and always,” said Salvator. And taking leave of Antonio, he added : “Listen, young man : when you told me that you were a painter, I remember with what emotion I found that you resembled Sanzio. I thought that I saw another of those young fools who copy the costume, the fashions, the beard and the hair of an illustrious master, and who make themselves imitators of a talent that they can never possess. But now, I repeat to you, I have seen in your painting a spark of the sacred fire which animated the works of Raphael.

On hearing these words from the master, the artist’s eyes sparkled. The phantom of glory appeared to him in the future, followed and surrounded by an endless retinue of illusions.—Raphael Sanzio !—The echo of this divine name resounded in his ear, like the voice of his good genius, and the protection of Salvator was about to make real the wishes of his whole life.

When he left the little house in Bergognona street, his joy proclaimed itself in all his movements ; the radiant smile of hope animated his features ; glory and love, those gods of youth were coming to him to carry him off to their heaven ; there was enough in this dream to render delirious a less ardent head than that of Antonio Scacciati. His Magdalen at the feet of Christ appeared to his eyes of inestimable price, since the eulogium bestowed upon it by Salvator. He felt proud and worthy of the original, since this copy of an angelic face had risen him to the rank of a master. He awaited with anxiety the result of the promises of his friend.

At some time from this, the day came when the Academy of San-Luca opened in the church the annual exhibition of paintings. Salvator had Scacciati's Magdalen carried there ; the masters of San-Luca were surprised at the vigor of the coloring and the gracefulness of the drawing, and as soon as Salvator opened his mouth to announce that this marvellous painting was the work of a poor artist who had died at Naples, these gentlemen exhausted themselves in eulogiums and admiration ; the whole of the inhabitants of Rome were soon invited to see this legacy of genius. They all agreed in saying that since the time of Guido Reni nothing so beautiful had appeared ; the most enthusiastic went so far as to place the beautiful Magdalen above all that Guido had done.

In the thickest of the crowd who were praising the work of Scacciati, Salvator found one day, a man of strange aspect ; he was a middle-aged man, tall and thin, with a thin face ornamented with two red eyes, with a long pointed nose, and a long chin covered with a bunch of grey hair. This unique look was framed in a kind of stringy wig, surmounted by a high crowned hat with a plume ; a little brown mantle very scant, garnished with bright buttons, a Spanish doublet slashed with blue, a rapier nobly rusted, clear grey stockings which showed the knee-pan, and shoes loaded with pink bows, completed his costume. This uncommon personage seemed to be in ecstasies before the Magdalen ; now raising himself on the

points of his toes, then dropping down again ; moving his legs forward and back, uttering suppressed sighs, shutting his eyes until the tears flowed, then opening them again like telescopes, he devoured with his looks the angelic painting, lisping, in his sharp falsetto :

“Ah, dearest, most blessed ! Ah, most beautiful Marianna !”

Salvator curious to study nearer this living mummy, made his way through the crowd and placed himself near the unknown, to try and learn the motive that detained him before Scacciati's painting. Without noticing Salvator, the man cursed his poverty, that deprived him of the happiness of buying a picture which he would have been willing, at the price of a million, to withdraw from every profane gaze. Then he recommenced dancing about, giving thanks to the Virgin and to all the saints for the death of the painter who had executed this marvellous work. Salvator thought that this man had lost his wits.

Meanwhile, nothing was talked of in Rome but this famous Magdalen ; and when the Academicians of San-Luca met again to elect candidates to the vacant places, Salvator asked if the author of the master-piece, which was talked of in the city, was worthy of being admitted into the illustrious society. All, without even excepting the quarrelsome Josepin, were unanimous in deploring the loss of so eminent an artist, but whom, in the bottom of their hearts, they were glad to be rid of.

They carried hypocrisy so far as to decide that the palm of the academy should be awarded to the departed, and that a solemn mass should be said every year, in the church of San-Luca, for the repose of his soul. As soon as this resolution was taken, Salvator rose in the midst of the assembly :

“Well, gentlemen,” exclaimed he, “console yourselves ; the glorious prize with which you were about to honor the ashes of a dead man, you can give into the hands of a living one. Know that the Magdalen at the Saviour's feet, this painting that you have praised above all the productions of our time, is not the work of a Neapolitan painter who died

in poverty and obscurity ; its author is by your side, he is in Rome ; he is Antonio Scacciati, the surgeon ! ”

The painters of San-Luca looked at Salvator with astonishment. The great artist diverted himself awhile with the critical position in which he had placed them ; then he added : “ Until now, my masters, you have rejected Antonio from your college, on account of his humble profession ; for myself, I think that a surgeon would be very much in place in the noble Academy of San-Luca to adjust the distorted figures which come from time to time from the hands of some of our painters.”

The gentlemen of San-Luca quietly swallowed the pill ; they pretended to render justice to the genius of Antonio Scacciati, and proceeded to his reception with the accustomed ceremonial.

This news was hardly known, when congratulations were received on every hand ; offers of service, and orders for great works besieged Antonio's studio. A word from Salvator had raised him from obscurity. Glory and fortune smiled upon him,—what could be wanting to complete his happiness ? Great then, was the surprise of Salvator on seeing him enter his house one day, mournful and sad with suffering.

“ Master,” said Antonio to him, “ of what use is the rank to which you have elevated me ? to what purpose are these honors, this reputation which comes to me, since my unhappiness does not quit my bedside ? Do you know, master, that the picture of the Magdalen, which made my glory, also causes my despair ? ”

“ Silence ! ” answered Salvator ; “ do not insult art by insulting your own work. And as to this unheard of misfortune which you deplore, I do not believe in it. You are in love, and your desires anticipate time ; that is all. Lovers are like children. Leave off these complaints, unworthy of a man of courage. Sit down and relate your story, show me the obstacles which oppose themselves to what you believe to be the height of happiness. The more difficult these

obstacles are to surmount, the more interest I shall take in them."

At these words, he took up his brush again, and Scacciati, seated near his easel, thus commenced :

"In Ripetta street rises a house, whose balcony is remarked as soon as you enter the city by the Popolo gate. There resides the strangest and most whimsical personage in Rome ; an old bachelor, hunted down by all the miseries of life, vain as a peacock, miserly as a Jew, giving himself the airs of a young man, as dandified as a duke, and what is worse, in love ; physically a vine stalk in Spanish doublet, with a faded wig, a plumed hat, gauntlet gloves, and a rapier."

"Halt there !" exclaimed Salvator ; and turning over the canvas on which he was working, he took a piece of chalk and sketched in two or three lines the profile of the personage that he had seen before Antonio's picture.

"By all the saints," exclaimed Antonio, without being able, in spite of his sorrow, to refrain from laughing, "that is truly the man, Signor Pasquale Capuzzi !"

"Well, then," continued Salvator, "since I already know your rival, go on."

"Signor Pasquale Capuzzi," said Antonio, "is as rich as he is miserly and pretentious. There is nothing good in him except his passion for the arts, above all, music and painting ; but he spoils this taste by so deplorable a mania, that even on this side his heart and his purse are inaccessible. Add to this, that he believes himself the best composer in the world, and singer, the like of whom the pope's chapel does not possess. He also calls our old Frescobaldi a novice ; and when Rome is in ecstasies at Ceccarelli's concerts, Pasquale says that he sings like a postillion's boot ; but as the celebrated Ceccarelli, first singer to the pope, bears the name of Odoardo Ceccarelli de Merania, our Capuzzi, to show his contempt, calls himself, pompously, Signor Pasquale Capuzzi de Senigaglia ; that is the name of the village where, it is said, his mother brought him into the world before his time, being seized with a sudden fright, at the sight of a monstrous fish.

“ In his youth, Capuzzi produced on the stage an opera, which was pitilessly hissed ; and, far from being cured by this fall, of the desire to pain the ears of others, he dared to say of Francesco Cavalli, the celebrated author of the *Mariage of Thetis and Pelée*, that this chapel master had borrowed some of his sublimest melodies from him. He has, in addition to this, a mania for singing, and accompanies himself on a miserable guitar, which is dragged everywhere after him by an ugly dwarf, whom he makes his *Pylades*, and who is known by all Rome under the name of *Pitichinaccio*. To these two personages is harnessed that d——d doctor *Pyramid*, who brays like a lost donkey, all the time imagining that he possesses a bass which rivals that of *Martinelli*. These three demons perch themselves every evening on the balcony in *Ripetta* street, to the great annoyance of the neighborhood.

“ My father formerly had free access to this madman, whose wig and beard he adjusted. After his death, I inherited his practice, and Capuzzi was at first charmed with my visits, for I knew how, better than any one else, to give a unique turn of coquetry to his moustache, and I had, above all, the civility to receive, whilst bowing to the ground, so trifling a salary, that an apprentice would not have accepted it. It is true that master Capuzzi thought to do things liberally by splitting my ears every night with a new air of his own composition. That was the comedy ; here is the drama :

“ One day when I reached my patient's house, a door opens, and I find myself in the presence of an angel ; yes, an angel ! it was my *Magdalen*. I stopped in my embarrassment, trembling with emotion ; love had entered my heart at first sight ! The old man Capuzzi, gratified at my surprise, said to me smilingly, that this beautiful girl was his niece, that she was called *Marianna*, and that the poor orphan had no one in the world to depend upon except himself. From that day, Capuzzi's house became a paradise for me ; but I sought in vain, all means, all opportunities to meet *Marianna* alone. An evil genius prevented it ; some fugitive glances, some hidden

signs were the only proofs that made me hope that I should be loved. The old monkey undoubtedly perceived this, for he pretty clearly gave me to understand that it was not to his taste. I dared to throw myself at his feet and confess my love to him. His answer was a burst of laughter, and he scornfully told me to go back to my barber's shop.

In the delirium of my despair, I proclaimed that I was not a vile reaper of chins, that I had studied surgery with success, and that in painting I followed the style of Annibal Caracci and the inimitable Guido Reni. This simplicity procured for me another attack of mockery; and the old Cerebus pushing me towards the door, tried to throw me down stairs. Reduced to the necessity of using the right of legitimate defence, I tumbled over, with all possible gentleness, the ferocious guardian of Marianna; but from that day his door was closed to me! This was the condition of things when you came to Rome, and heaven inspired the worthy father Bonifazio with the idea of introducing me to you. Since when, thanks to your support, I have taken a place in the Academy of San-Luca; as Rome applauds my efforts, I took courage to go to Capuzzi; I produced on him the effect of a spectre. Profiting by his stupor, I gravely asked him if a surgeon, crowned with the palm of San-Luca, was worthy of aspiring to the hand of Marianna. This name operated upon him like an electric shock. He raved about, he howled like a demon, saying that I was an assassin, that I had stolen his niece from him by copying her features upon canvas; that she was his delight, his life, his heaven; that he would like to burn me, together with my accursed studio and my hateful picture!

The exasperation of the worthy man, who began to cry out, murder, robbers, made me fear some misfortune, and I quickly fled, rage in my heart and death in my soul! The old Capuzzi is madly in love with his niece; he watches her with all the precautions of an atrocious jealousy, and if he obtains

a dispensation from the pope, he will forcibly marry her. I am the most unfortunate of men ! ”

“ On the contrary,” said Salvator, “ you are near the realization of your hopes ; Marianna loves you ; it will only be necessary to withdraw her from the tyranny of Capuzzi.—Return to your studio, keep quiet, and come and see me again to-morrow, at day break, to draw up our plan of attack.”

II.

Salvator made such good use of his time, that on the following day he related to his friend Antonio all the details of Capuzzi's mode of living :—“ Poor Marianna is on the rack ; her argus exhales in sighs, and from morning to night he besieges her with silliness, or sings, in order to soften her, the ridiculous airs which he has himself composed. More than this, he is so jealous, that he will not allow the poor child to have any other human creature to serve her, than the hideous Pitichinaccio, disguised as a duenna. If the hoary wretch absents himself, gratings and bolts do their office within, whilst a kind of porter, a reformed robber, guards the house door. To enter by force is hardly practicable ; and yet, to-morrow night, I will, dear Antonio, place you once more in the presence of Capuzzi and your beautiful Marianna.”

“ Good heaven ! can it be ! by what means ? ”

“ Chance,” continued Salvator, “ has already connected me with Pasquale Capuzzi. Look, that dilapidated and worm-eaten spinet in the corner, belongs to the old madman, to whom I still owe the price of it, ten ducats. Wishing to amuse, by a little music, the tiresome moments of my convalescence, dame Catherine procured for me this miserable instrument, which was brought from Ripetta street. I did not think at first either of the price of the thing or of the proprietor, and it was only yesterday that I learned that honest Capuzzi had taken me for a dupe. Now, give me the whole of your attention. Every day, towards dark, when

the abortion Pitichinaccio has finished his functions of chamber-maid, signor Pasquale takes him in his arms, and——”

At this moment, Salvator's door was noisily opened, and signor Pasquale Capuzzi appeared in person, and richly caparisoned, to the eyes of the two friends. At the sight of Scacciati, a shock, like the effect produced by the torpedo, stopped him short, breathless and stupified. Salvator arose, and taking him by both hands :

“ Indeed, my worthy lord,” said he to him, “ your visit fills me with joy ; is the purpose of it to see my new productions, or to give me an order ? In what manner can I serve you ? ”

“ I come expressly to see you,” stammered Capuzzi ; “ but, as I want to talk alone with you, we will put it off until a more convenient time.”

“ God forbid,” replied Salvator ; “ you cannot choose your time better ; and I congratulate myself on being able to make you acquainted with the first artist in Rome, Antonio Scacciati, author of the famous Magdalen at the feet of Christ.”

At these words, the old man trembled every limb ; his red eyes flashed furious looks at poor Antonio, who, concentrating all his remaining self-possession, made, nevertheless, the most careless and easy salutation, adding, in the tone of a great lord, and emphasizing every syllable, that he judged himself too happy at such a meeting, and at being able to salute a man, who, of all Italy, possessed in the highest degree the love of science and the arts.

Capuzzi, swallowing his anger in favor of this warm eulogium, screwed his mouth into a smile, twirled his moustache, and, after several “ I thank you's,” inarticulately uttered, he hastened to remind Salvator of his little debt of ten ducats :

“ I am at your orders for that trifle,” said the painter, “ but will you please to throw a glance on this sketch, and accept a goblet of excellent Syracuse ? ”

And, suiting the action to the word, Salvator placed his easel in the most favorable light for the drawing he wished to

show, then, offering an oak chair to Capuzzi, he hastened to fill, before him, a fine agate cup, in which sparkled the precious liquor that he was proud to offer to his new guest. The eyes of Marianna's tyrant shone like carbuncles at the sight of the generous wine poured out for him by the artist. He slowly bent his head, as if to collect himself whilst discussing this exquisite beverage; then raising his eyes, long hidden beneath his withered eyelids, he several times caressed his long grey moustache, murmuring, in a low voice:—"Divine! Perfect! Admirable!" Without its being possible for those present to guess if this too strange personage gave his opinion of the Syracuse juice, or Salvator's painting.

Salvator took this opportunity to attack him boldly:

"Have I not heard, my worthy lord, that you possess an admirable niece? Nothing is talked of, in Ripetta street, so much as the charms of Marianna. All those who have seen her become sleepless; and I know that more than one young man of noble race, who has caught cold whilst watching, for a look, a smile from that delicious girl, through the thick glass of the balcony in front of your house."

The old man frowned; his answer was short and awkward: "Indeed," said he, "the young men of our time are troubled with a strange perversity. When their eyes have plotted the dishonor of a poor orphan, there is no seduction which they are not ready to become guilty of. I do not say that for my niece, master Salvator; Marianna is assuredly very pretty; but, after all, we ought still to look upon her as a careless, frolicksome child."

Salvator, in order not to lose ground, changed his proceedings, and had recourse to the flagon of Syracuse before renewing the assault.

"But, at least, my dear signor Capuzzi, you will not refuse to tell me if this niece, whom you prize so highly, this ravishing Marianna, that all Rome is now making the whole subject of their conversations, has light hair, or brown, or even black, and if by chance she is not the admirable original of the pic-

ture of the Magdalen at the feet of Christ, which the academicians of San-Luca had judged so unseasonably,—so little in conformity with the ordinary rules of equity.”

“What do I know about it, and what can I tell you?” repeated Capuzzi, accompanying his language with actions in which very little cordiality was manifested; “will you have the kindness to allow,” added he, “a change of the subject of conversation? This excites in me nervous impressions which are very painful.”

This management was repeated so long and so well, that signor Capuzzi, pushed from his self-possession by the artist’s questions, bounded about like a tiger-cat, and pushing back his half filled goblet, exclaimed in his owl-like voice:—“By all the devils in hell, you have given me some kind of poison, in order to play upon me some infamous trick with that accursed Antonio! But I will set things to rights. Think of immediately paying me the ten ducats which are due me, and after that, Satan take you.”

“How,” cried Salvator, “dare you insult me in this manner in my own house? You want ten ducats for a worm-eaten spinet? Ten ducats! no! not even five, nor three, not even an obole of copper!” And suiting the action to the words, he kicked the unfortunate instrument, from which each blow made the splinters fly about the room.

“But there are laws in Rome! there are judges!” howled Capuzzi; “I will let you rot in a dungeon! I——”

As he was trying to reach the door, Salvator seized him with an iron hand, and nailed him to the seat he had just left.

“Well, my very worthy signor Pasquale,” said he to him with the most velvety accent he knew how to assume, “do you not see, that all this is a game? Ten ducats for your spinet,—for such a master-piece? not so, you shall have thirty for it.”

This promise, uttered with the greatest seriousness, had a magical effect. Pasquale Capuzzi no longer spoke of a prison,

and repeated in a low voice :—" Thirty ducats ! thirty ducats for such a master-piece ! "

Then, fixing his eyes upon the artist :

" But do you know, master Salvator, that you have cruelly treated me ? "

" Thirty ducats ! " answered the painter.

" But," added Capuzzi, " you have outraged me in an unworthy manner ! "

" Forty ducats," continued Salvator, " and I promise you not to think any more about it, provided you find it agreeable to subscribe to a trifling condition. You are, master Pasquale Capuzzi de Senegaglia, the greatest composer in Italy, and more than that, the most exquisite singer in the universe. I have heard with enthusiasm the grand scene from the opera of *Le Nozze di Teti et Peleo*, of which that miserable Francesco Cavalli has stolen the divine melody : will you, whilst I put the spinet in order again, sing us that scene ? I shall owe you, on my part, an eternal gratitude for it."

Pasquale Capuzzi so well enjoyed this astounding eulogium, that his whole physiognomy was distorted by an ineffable grimace ; the muscles of his thin face were puffed out, and his infinitely little red eyes sparkled under a convulsion of the optic nerve, which gave to his looks an expression of satisfied malice that no words could describe.

" But, I am," said he to Salvator, " your very humble servant, for you appear yourself to be in possession of a most exquisite musical taste ; your tact in matters of harmony announces the most severe study, and I believe that art would make enormous progress, if the wits of Rome would take your judgment for a guide. Listen, signor painter, listen to my favorite air ; I am not lavish of my compositions, but you are capable of appreciating them, and I will treat you like a friend."

Salvator, taken in his snare, prayed God in his heart, to make him deaf at least for that day.

" You load me with joy at the honor," answered he with an inward suffering, worthy of this lie.

Nothing could describe the monstrous smile of the old fellow ; he began, by putting on a look of his grey eyes, whilst trying to catch the key-note of his air ; then raising himself on his toes, throwing about his puny arms like the wings of an old cock, he burst out into so formidable a bellowing, that the walls of the studio trembled.

Dame Catherine and her daughters ran at the noise, thinking that some misfortune had happened. Judge of their surprise at the sight of the excited virtuoso, who was not disconcerted by their presence. Salvator had taken up the damaged spinet, and on the case of it he began to paint the scene which he had before his eyes. Capuzzi, Antonio, Catherine and her daughters were perfectly delineated, and doctor Pyramid, although absent, was not forgotten. Meanwhile, the indefatigable Capuzzi, desirous of earning his forty ducats, did not spare the deafened audience a single one of his infernal airs ; at the end of two long hours, exhausted, and in a profuse perspiration, his face purple and his veins violet colored, he sank voiceless into a seat.

Salvator placed in front of him his picture, improvised on the spinet case. Capuzzi looked at it long and attentively, rubbing his eyes to assure himself that he was not dreaming. Suddenly crowding his hat upon his wig, he took his cane in one hand, and, with the other, plucking from its hinges Salvator's sketch, he threw himself down the staircase like a chased thief.

Go, then, old madman," exclaimed Salvator, " Count Colonna or my friend Rosi, will pay you dearly for this caprice of my brush ! "

When Capuzzi had departed, Salvator and Antonio raised all their batteries with consummate art against this terrible adversary. It was decided that they should attack, the following night, the fortress of Ripetta street. The two friends separated to attend, each one in his way, to the most urgent preparations.

That same evening, at dark, Signor Pasquale shut and

carefully bolted all the doors ; then taking Pitichinaccio under his arm, he carried him back to his own house. On the way, the abortion loudly complained, (being so badly paid to sing every day Capuzzi's airs, or in burning his fingers to make the maccaroni boil,) of adding to that labor the more difficult still, of serving the beautiful Marianna, who loaded him with buffets and kicks, every time he came near her to fulfil his duties of valet de chambre. The old man consoled him and filled his mouth with sweetmeats to make him hold his tongue ; he even added that he would have cut for him an abbe's coat out of his oldest doublet ; Pitchinaccio required besides, to seal the peace, a wig and a rapier. It was disputing in this manner that they reached Bergognona, where Pitchinaccio lived, near Salvator's studio. Capuzzi placed the dwarf on his crooked feet, opened the door, and they both ascended, one behind the other, a staircase as straight and steep as a ladder leading to a hen-house.

When they had reached the middle of the stairs, a frightful racket shook the building : it was a drunken man who was asking, with loud oaths, the way to get out of this house of h—I. Pitichinaccio hugged the wall, and begged Capuzzi to pass on before : but hardly had the honorable citizen of Sengaglia ascended several steps, than the drunken man, loosing his equilibrium, fell upon him, and drove him like an avalanche into the street.

Capuzzi was sorely bruised on the pavement, and the drunkard, like a filled sack, quietly crushed him, without saying a word. At his cries of distress, two passers-by stopped ; they picked up Pasquale, who rubbed his shins, whilst the drunkard, who appeared to be a little sobered by this event, went off without offering any excuse and, cursing him heartily.

“ Good heaven ! Signor Pasquale, what are you doing here at this time, in this situation ? what misfortune has happened to you ? ”

“ Ah ! my noble lords, I am nearly killed ! that hell-hound has broken all my limbs ! ”

"Let us see!" exclaimed Antonio, (for Capuzzi's deliverers were our two artists,) "let us see!"

And, feeling of the thin carcase of his enemy, he pinched his right leg so forcibly that the patient made a terrible outcry.

"Ah, my worthy sir, your left leg is broken; the case is very serious, and you are in danger of dying or remaining crippled for life."

"Alas! my dear Jesus!" sighed Capuzzi, in a mournful voice.

"Courage," replied Antonio; "although I am a painter and an academician of San-Luca, I have not forgotten surgery. We will carry you to Salvator's house, and I will see that you are well taken care of."

"But, my excellent master Antonio," said Capuzzi, sadly, "I know that you have but little cause to be my friend."

"On the contrary," interrupted Salvator; "but, in the presence of suffering, every other sentiment must give way to humanity. Come, Antonio, let us fulfil this duty."

They then took up the old man, one by the head, and the other by the feet, and they carried him away, not without laughing secretly at his groans. Dame Catherine delivered them a fine discourse upon charity, without sparing reflections upon Capuzzi.

"You have received," said she to him, "no more than you deserve; God punishes you for tormenting your niece; for you are a jealous brute, a true tyrant; and if you do not die in consequence of this accident, may you profit by the lesson; provide yourself with friends, if you can, and try to let your little Marianna see a little of the sun. Is it not an odious thing to treat as you do so pretty a girl, so sweet and so loving? And are you not ashamed to shut her up under the guard of such a monster as Pitchinaccio? Do you not fear that all the young people in the city will rise some day against a like oppression? And tell me, then, if you dare, why you dress up your miserable dwarf in a duenna's robe? What

do you do with this Cerebus, who is not worth a kick? Look here, my poor signor, in the state which I find you, listen for once seriously to my representations, for fear that it should cost you dearer soon. When any one has, like yourself, so gentle a dove in a cage, it is not kind to treat it like an owl. If your heart was not dried up and your mind was not crippled, would you not be, all day long, studying to guess and anticipate the least caprices of Marianna? Take care of the justice of God, my very honored master; and if he allows you to recover, offer him, as expiation for your unworthy proceeding, the marriage of your niece with a fine young gentleman who seems to have fallen from the sky expressly for her happiness."

This long sermon was delivered from beginning to end by the severe Catherine, whilst the two painters were putting the unfortunate Capuzzi in close confinement between two sheets. The poor devil was so well convinced of the entire dislocation of his individual self, that he dared neither stir nor breathe. Antonio made signs to prevent him from speaking, and he suddenly begged dame Catherine to procure for him, as quickly as possible, a good quantity of iced water. As to the injury, it was trifling, and the danger only existed in the disturbed brain of Capuzzi. The person ambuscaded in the house where Pitichinaccio resided, had played his part to perfection; the old man's fall had produced no other consequence than a few contusions, of no great severity, which were attested sufficiently by several black and blue spots on Capuzzi's blistered skin.

Capuzzi had been taken in a snare, for the whole adventure of that night was the contrivance of Salvator. Antonio tied up the good man's leg in splints, so as to prevent him from moving; he also enveloped him in compresses dipped in iced water, which he often renewed, under the pretence of preventing the inflammation. The poor devil, thus tied up, shivered in every limb.

"My good master, Antonio," said he, from time to time, "do you think that I shall escape from it?"

"We shall see," replied the artist, "I shall do my best to get you out of this scrape ; but——"

"Ah, my dear, my excellent friend, do not abandon me !"

"You really say that, but you have treated me very severely !"

"Forget it, then, I beg of you !"

"I am satisfied to do so," continued Antonio ; "but your niece, your niece must feel uneasy at your absence ; she will die with anguish if she does not see you back again ; so that, I think it would be prudent to have you transported to your own house ; there I will look at the dressing again, and I will instruct Marianna in the care it will be necessary to take to hasten your cure."

At the remembrance of Marianna, Capuzzi shut his eyes and recollected himself for a moment ; then he held out his hand to Antonio, and, drawing him towards him :—"Swear to me, my good sir, that you have no project against the repose of my niece."

"I swear it to you !" replied Antonio ; "and you can have the same confidence in my words as you have in my care ; I do not conceal from you that this little Marianna attracted me the first time that chance threw me in her way ; I even had the weakness to reproduce, from remembrance, and feature for feature, her face in the picture of the Magdalen at the feet of the Saviour ; but, in truth, it was nothing, as I am aware, but the passion of an artist. I esteem your niece ; she is a piquant young girl, and I thought for a moment that I loved her ; but I have, now, other affairs in hand."

"Ah, my dear friend, you do not love Marianna ? Say so, repeat it again ! this is a divine balm that you are pouring into my wounds ! I feel myself cured, perfectly cured !"

"Really," exclaimed Salvator, "if you were not known as a wise and sensible man, it would be thought that you were madly in love with your niece !"

At these words Capuzzi shut his eyes again ; his face contracted painfully, and he complained of a return of his pain.

Meanwhile, day began to break, Antonio and Salvator raised the mattress of the sick man, who in vain begged to have the compresses taken off, his wig and moustache adjusted, in order that his appearance should not frighten Marianna. Two laboring men were waiting in the street with a litter, on which they placed Capuzzi. Dame Catherine, who was not in the secret of the artists, wanted to follow him home, to lecture him again as he deserved. She spread over the litter an old worn out cloak, and this procession took the road to Ripetta street.

Marianna, seeing her uncle in this pitiful state, burst into tears, and covered his wrinkled hands with kisses. It was a touching sight to see this young girl disconsolate for the misfortune which had happened to her persecutor; but such is the quickness of woman's instinct, that a sign from Salvator was sufficient to reveal to her the mystification of which Capuzzi was the subject. Modesty was mingled with joy, Marianna saw near, her beloved Antonio: a quick blush covered her pale cheeks, and an adorably malicious smile sparkled amidst her tears. Pasquale Capuzzi was so overjoyed with the tender welcome of his niece, that he forgot his hurt, and you could imagine nothing more grotesque than his amorous postures and his lover's sighs. But Antonio did not give him time to recover himself; the splints were removed and more closely bound; they bundled up the imaginary sick man like a wooden doll, his head buried in a heap of cushions, and Salvator discreetly retired, to leave the two lovers to the unlooked for happiness of seeing each other again. The young girl had appeared to him, in this interview, of admirable beauty. That ravishing face was a thousand times more worthy of being traced as the image of the Mother of God than the patron saint of penitent women. The artist felt a touch of jealousy, but it was as evanescent as air, and the natural loyalty of his character immediately dissipated this movement of the passions, caused by a master-piece of grace. Salvator thought no longer of anything except finishing his finest

work, by delivering Marianna from the claws of her guardian. The good and sweet child, forgetting the severity of Capuzzi, ran every moment to his bedside to inquire how he felt ; she found herself so sweetly happy in devoting herself to the assuagement of his sufferings, that she abandoned several times a little white hand to his kisses.

The morrow, at an early hour, Antonio ran to his friend's house, with a disconsolate look.

"Alas," exclaimed he, "all is lost, all is discovered!"

"So much the better," said Salvator; "tell me how it is."

"Figure to yourself, that yesterday, on my return to Capuzzi's house, which I had only left for a moment, to seek some good purgative medicines, I perceived the old man, dressed from head to foot, at the door, talking with doctor Pyramid. Capuzzi could not be described; he threatened me with his fist, assailed me with curses, and swore that he would have me strangled if ever I stepped my foot into his house again. 'And as for your protector, Salvator,' added he, 'I have ducats enough to settle his account without a trial.' As he was crying out and raving in this manner, aided by doctor Pyramid, who chorused his imprecations, the passers by stopped, and I saw that I was threatened with difficulty, if, plucking up, in spite of my emotion, all the courage and strength I had left, I had not rescued myself by rudely attacking this devilish Capuzzi. This is the second time that I have been obliged to act in this manner towards the uncle and guardian of Marianna; you see, master, that all is lost!"

"By my honor, that is joyful news!" exclaimed Salvator; "but I knew that long before you told me. Doctor Splendiano Accoramboni, who is in search of all wounds and bruises, has too soon become acquainted with his friend Capuzzi's accident; his zeal became inflamed; he examined the dressings, and not much cunning was necessary to discover the stratagem."

"But how do you know all these things?"

"What does it matter? it is enough to profit by it, and I

shall do my best, since I have become bound to make you succeed. I know, besides, that Marianna possesses the disposition that inspires love; she has persuaded old Capuzzi that she was ignorant of our stratagem, and that she much despised it, and that on no account would she allow us to see her again. The old argus, mad with joy, and believing himself on the eve of an unlooked for happiness, has sworn to grant every wish to Marianna; she immediately asked to be taken to signor Formica's theatre, near the Popolo gate.—The good man, surprised at this desire, held council with doctor Pryamid and Pitichinaccio; and they decided that Capuzzi ought to keep his word. To-morrow Marianna is to go to the theatre; Pitichinaccio is to accompany her, dressed like a duenna."

Antonio Scacciati became more and more surprised, and he was not far from thinking that his friend had dealings with the devil, to have so well informed himself of all that concerned Marianna. This is the explanation that Salvator gave him of this omniscience, from which no detail escaped. In the Ripetta street house lodged, next door to Capuzzi, an old friend of Salvator's hostess. This woman's daughter, a firm friend of Margerita's, had taken a tender interest in Capuzzi's poor niece, and chance favored their secret interviews, for Margerita's friend had discovered in her chamber an opening for ventilation, which had for a long time been closed by a thin board. This aperture opened into a dark closet, which belonged to Marianna's chamber, only separated from her neighbor's lodging by a simple partition. The young girls had, in this manner, long and confidential conversations, during the daily siesta of old Capuzzi; it was from Margerita's friend that Salvator had procured all the necessary information concerning the domestic habits of Marianna's tyrant, and had learned the projected visit to Formica's theatre.

But it is necessary, before going farther, that the reader become acquainted with the famous Formica and his theatre at the People's gate.

The originator of this enterprise was a certain Nicolo Musso, who caused to be represented, during the Carnival, impromptu pantomimes. The location which served for the exercise of his industry did not announce a very brilliant state of finances ; there was only, in place of boxes and orchestra, a circular gallery which bore, on the exterior, the representation of count Colonna's arms, the protector of Nicolo Musso. The stage was a kind of scaffolding covered with boards and ornamented with old carpets. The partitions were decorated, by turns, with strips of painted paper which represented, according to the necessities, a forest, an apartment, or a street. For seats, the spectators had to content themselves with hard and narrow benches ; so that the public in the theatre made more noise than it brought in money. For the rest, nothing could be seen more amusing than these joyous parodies, in which Nicolo Musso was the prime mover ; it was a running fire, well sustained, of epigrams against all the vices, all the defects, all the singularities and all that was ridiculous in society. Every actor gave to his part its broadest physiognomy. But Pasquarello, official clown, bore off the applause by his caustic witicisms, and the originality of his pantomime, which reproduced, so as perfectly to deceive, the voice, the form and the movements of people well known in the city. The individual who played this part of critic, and who was called amongst the people Signor Formica, was a phenomenon. There was in his talent for mimicry such an elasticity, his voice sometimes took such strange inflections, that one could hardly refrain from shuddering, and at the same time yield to the maddest bursts of laughter. At the side of this personage figured, as habitual companion, a certain doctor Graziano, whose part was played by an old circus rider of Bologna, named Maria Agli.

The fashionable society of Rome did not disdain the comic representations of Nicolo Musso. The theatre of the People's Gate was always well filled, and Formica's name was in every one's mouth. What contributed not a little to augment the

reputation of this place, was that Nicolo Musso never showed himself anywhere out of his theatre ; a very well kept secret concealed him, and no one even knew exactly where this singular manager could be in the habit of going. Such was the theatre where the pretty Marianna wished to go.

"The best plan, then," said Salvator, "is to attack our enemy openly ; and I have a scheme in my head, the execution of which must be accomplished during the passage from Ripetta street to the theatre."

This project whispered into Antonio's ear, made him bound with joy and impatience ; they were about to separate Marianna from her persecutor, and rudely chastise that doctor Pyramid, who had taken a notion to throw stones into the lover's garden !

When evening came, Salvator and Antonio each took a guitar, and met under the balcony in Ripetta street, to enrage old Capuzzi by giving to his pretty niece a brilliant serenade, which would be heard by the whole neighborhood. Salvator had a very remarkable voice, and Antonio had not made a bad figure in a duet with master Odoardo Ceccarelli. From the prelude of our impromptu troubadours, Signor Pasquale appeared on the terrace, to impose silence on the vagabonds who came to disturb his repose. But the neighbors, attracted by the melody of the first accords that they had heard, cried out to him, with much jeering, that jealousy alone excited his anger, and that he might go back into his hole, to sing falsetto there at his ease, and bore the ears of the unfortunate individuals forced to live and suffer under his key. Salvator and his companion thus passed nearly the whole night in singing love songs, which they interrupted from time to time, in order to vary the performance, by satirical songs against ridiculous old men, of whom Capuzzi was the most finished type. Marianna approached the window several times, and, in spite of the discontented signs of her guardian, she exchanged several speaking glances with her beloved Antonio.

The next day was the first day of Carnival. The crowd

hastened to the promenades and pressed towards the People's Gate, around Nicolo Musso's theatre. The pretty Marianna had forced Capuzzi to keep his promise. In consequence, the old man, perfumed and trimmed up, imprisoned in his Spanish doublet, his pointed hat leaning towards his ear and ornamented with a new yellow feather, walked with visible anxiety in his tight shoes, drawing along in his wake Marianna, whose attractions were hidden from sight, under the double veils with which the Argus had required that she should envelope herself. On the other side walked doctor Splendiano Accoramboni, nearly hidden by his gigantic wig. Behind them, and on Marianna's heels, from whom he did not take his eyes, hobbled the abortion, Pitichinaccio, dressed up in a fire colored skirt, and with his head covered with flowers of every shade.

Signor Formica was, that evening, in his gayest mood ; it was a pleasure to hear him mingle with his comic scenes, couplets which he sang, imitating the voices of the most celebrated artists. Old Capuzzi trembled with joy ; his passion for the theatre came back to his memory ; and, in his exaltations, he bruised Marianna's hands with kisses, swearing that he would take her every evening to Nicolo Musso's entertainment. His applause, his laughter, drew all eyes towards him ; Signor Splendiano alone kept his professional gravity, and with his eyes and by gesture, he rebuked Capuzzi's and Marianna's bursts of laughter ; giving out, entirely unheeded, the names of twenty diseases which a too great extension of the jaws might occasion. But his patients laughed as much at his morose face as at Signor Formica. As for the infinitely little Pitchinaccio, he had sadly roosted himself behind doctor Pyramid's wig, and called upon the devil to take him from between two women, who were much amused at his grotesque appearance. A cold sweat ran from his forehead to his livid cheeks, and sharp sounds, badly articulated, sufficiently expressed the disagreeableness of his situation.

When the play was finished, Pasquale Capuzzi prudently

allowed all the spectators to go out, and the lamps to be all extinguished, except one, which served to light a lantern, with which he was to conduct Marianna and her two companions to Ripetta street. Pitichinaccio again began to groan and complain. Capuzzi took him under his left arm to pacify him, whilst with the other, he drew along his pretty niece. Splendiano walked on before, armed with the lantern, which gave nearly enough light to render the darkness more visible.

At some distance from the People's Gate, four figures, wrapped in immense cloaks of the color of the walls, suddenly stopped the progress of the company. By a blow of the hand, the doctor's lantern was extinguished and thrown down; then a dim light proceeding from an unknown source, lighted four skulls, whose eyeless sockets were turned towards Capuzzi and the doctor, who were petrified with terror.

"Curses, curses, curses on thee, Splendiano Accoramboni!" said the four phantoms. Then the first continued in a plaintive voice:

"Knowest thou me, Splendiano? I am Cordier, the French painter, whom thou hast put into the earth, last week, with thy devilish drugs!"

The second advanced, and said:—"Knowest thou me, Splendiano? I am Kufner, the German painter, killed by thy opiates!"

The third cried out to him, in a hoarse voice:—"Knowest thou me, Splendiano? I am Liers of Flanders, whom thou hast poisoned with thy pills, to gain possession of my pictures!"

Lastly, the fourth said to him:—"Knowest thou me, Splendiano? I am Ghigi, the Neapolitan, whom thy powders sent to purgatory!"

And all four exclaimed in chorus:—"Curses, curses, curses on thee, Splendiano Accoramboni! the devil sends us to seek thee, illustrious doctor Pyramid! come, come."

And seizing on him with the quickness of lightning, they disappeared in the darkness, howling like a storm wind.

Pasquale Capuzzi recovered a little from his fright when

he saw that his friend Splendiano alone was hunted by the demons. The hideous Pitchinaccio, shuddering with fear, had hidden his head under his master's cloak, and clung to his doublet with all the tenacity of a drowning man. The beautiful Marianna had fainted,—"Come back to thyself, my cherished one, my sweet dove," said Capuzzi to her after the doctor had been carried off; "alas, the devil is carrying my illustrious friend Splendiano under the Pyramid of Cestius! May saint Bernard, who was so great a physician of souls, have pity on his, and defend it against the enemies which it will find in the other world! Alas, alas! who now will sing bass in my evening concerts? and when shall I be able myself, after such an accident, to draw from my throat one single pure and clear octave? Finally, all is for the best, for God has spared us. Come back to thyself, Marianna, my chicken, all is over!"

The young girl came gradually to herself, and begged Capuzzi to allow her to walk by herself, whilst he shook off the despairing embrace of Pitichinaccio; but the uncle would not consent to it, and pressed her arm more closely within his own, to protect her against all kinds of danger to come. Now, as he retook the road to his house, four horrible demons appeared suddenly by his side, as if vomited from the earth; these four figures, muffled up in fire colored cloaks, threw out from their mouths and eyes bluish flames, and began to dance around Capuzzi, crying out:

"Phew, phew! Pasquale Capuzzi! old amorous devil, accursed fool! We are thy companions from hell, we are the devils of ugly lovers, and we are about to transport thee to our furnace, with that little monster Pitchinaccio!"

And in the midst of these howlings, which made the echoes tremble, the four demoniacs threw themselves upon Capuzzi and Pitichinaccio, and gave them such a frightful fall, that the unfortunate Argus of the beautiful Marianna began to bray like a beaten donkey. The young girl had disengaged her arm from Capuzzi as soon as the devils had made their

appearance, but she had no longer strength to fly, nor voice to beg for mercy, and what was her surprise, when the ugliest of the devils, falling on his knee, and kissing her hand, said to her, in the sweetest tone :

“ My angel, my beloved Marianna, God is for us ! Oh ! tell me that thou lovest me, whilst my friends detain thy jailer ! Come with me, I know an asylum where none can reach us ! ”

“ Antonio ! ” exclaimed Marianna, ready to fall.

But suddenly Ripetta street was inundated with the light of torches, and Antonio felt the sudden chill of a blade which grazed his shoulder. He sprang up, turned round, and, sword raised, attacked his adversary, whilst his three friends were wrangling with a company of Sbires. But their bravery was about yielding to the number of their assailants, if two strangers had not sprung into the midst of the soldiers, uttering menacing cries, and if one of them had not struck to the earth, with a furious blow, the Sbire who was struggling with Antonio. This unlooked for aid ended the combat, and the Sbires dispersed in the direction of the People's Gate.

Salvator Rosa, for it was he who had so energetically aided his friend Antonio, proposed to follow the Sbires into the city. But the young painters who had aided Antonio in his nocturnal adventure, and the comedian Maria Agli, who had not shown himself as lacking courage, observed that this proceeding would hardly be wise, because the sentinels at the Gate, warned by the Sbires, would doubtlessly arrest them. They then agreed to ask for shelter for the night at Nicolo Musso's house, who received them and gave them a cordial welcome. The painters laid aside their pasteboard masks and their cloaks, rubbed with phosphorus : they then examined the wounds and bruises which they had received, and washed away, as far as was in their power, all traces of the fight. When our friends talked over the events of the night, they discovered that the expedition had failed, on account of their having forgotten a very important personage, Michael,

the old bravo, who served Capuzzi as watch-dog, and who had followed them at a distance, as ordered, from Ripetta street to Formica's theatre, and during the return. Michael, whose former trade rendered him less superstitious, seeing the phantoms and devils appear, had run to call the guard at the People's Gate ; but he did not return with the reinforcement until after doctor Splendiano had been carried off. One of the young painters had seen Michael carrying away the fainting Marianna in his arms ; and Pasquale Capuzzi, profiting by the confusion, had followed them with as quick a step as his trembling legs, and the weight of the unfortunate Pitichinaccio, who clung to his neck in despair, would allow.

On the morrow was found, near the pyramid of Cestius, the doctor Splendiano, rolled up into a ball like a porcupine, and snoring in the recesses of his wig like a bird in a downy nest ; it was necessary to shake him to arouse him from his stupor. On awaking, he raved, and a thousand arguments were used to prove to him that he had not quitted this humble planet, and that Rome still enjoyed the favor of possessing him. When they had very carefully transported him to his own house, he gave thanks to all the saints for his deliverance from the devil's claws ; then throwing out of the window ointments, pills, opiates, elixirs, phials and boxes of all kinds, he burnt his prescriptions and books of medicine, and swore that he would, for the future, only treat his patients with the assistance of magnetism ;—the secret of which he had from an old physician, who died in the full odor of sanctity, and who, if he never cured his patients, at least, before sending them on their long journey, offered them a foretaste of the joys of paradise, in a marvellous ecstasy which he knew how to occasion in place of a last agony.

“ Salvator,” said Antonio to his friend, when they had, the next day, retired to the studio at Bergognona street ; “ Salvator, I have no more patience left, nor respect to show. I must make my way forcibly into this rascal, Capuzzi's house, kill him if he resists me. and carry off Marianna ! ”

"Brilliant idea," exclaimed Saltator, laughing loudly ; "you would have to make use of no little skill to escape from being hung after such a move ; for that would be to give the whole game to the devil. Stratagem is better than force ; and besides Capuzzi, I am sure, is on the defensive against an attack, and justice would prepare us a dish after her own fashion. Let us try stratagem then, and you may rely upon me ; this is also dame Catherine's advice, whose good sense I highly prize. We, the other night, played Signor Capuzzi a mad-cap trick ; everybody is talking about it ; and I, who am your elder, and by my calling a serious man, should be very sorry to have the names of the actors in it known. I will not, nevertheless, abandon you mid-way towards success. We will carry off Marianna, I assert it, and time presses ; Nicolo Musso and the comedian Formica shall assist me in this project."

"Nicolo Musso, Formica ?" said Antonio, with an astonished look : and what can I expect from these mountebanks ?"

"Softly, my friend, I beg of you," continued Salvator ; "Nicolo is the prince of good fellows ; and as for Formica, he is, with your permission, a kind of sorcerer, who knows more than one marvellous secret. Leave to me the care of making good use of them. Maria Agli and dear doctor Graziano of Bologna, have promised me their assistance. It is at Musso's theatre that I will give you an opportunity to carry off your Marianna."

"Salvator," replied Antonio, sadly, "you are giving me a deceptive hope ; for if, according to appearances, Capuzzi is on his guard against any new adventure, how can you suppose that he will ever go to Musso's theatre again ?"

"That is easier than you think," replied Salvator. "The most difficult part will be to get him there without companions and without escort. Hold yourself in readiness to fly from Rome with Marianna, as soon as you shall get possession of her. You will go to Florence, where your reputation precedes you ; and I will take upon myself to assure you there

an honorable calling and powerful protection. One word more, dear Antonio, Formica, the mountebank, holds your happiness in his hands ! ”

III.

Pasquale Capuzzi did not have to seek long for the authors of the scurvy trick, which had so seriously disturbed him near the People's Gate. Antonio and Salvator, whom he looked upon as the instigators, enjoyed in his mind unequalled hatred. Poor Marianna was ill, not, as he believed, from the effects of fear, but at Antonio's want of success, which placed her in much greater captivity. She hardly dared to hope that her friend would again attempt her deliverance. In her anger she overburdened Capuzzi with caprices and annoyances. The poor old man suffered without complaining, and trembled with love when, after scenes of reproaching and repining, enough to have destroyed the peace of a hundred families, Marianna deigned to allow him to place his dry and wrinkled lips upon her delicious little hand, rendered still more delicate by fever. Capuzzi then fell into an ecstasy, he fell at the feet of the beautiful young girl, protesting that he would devour with kisses, the pope's slipper, until he had obtained from His Holiness the dispensation necessary to his union with so adorable a person. Marianna quietly favored him in this thought : she understood that by allowing him to hold to this dear belief, she should secure the only chance of safety which remained to her.

Several days after the nocturnal adventure which we have related, Michael came and knocked at the door of the room in which Capuzzi was dining in company with Marianna, and said that a stranger insisted upon speaking with the master of the house.

“ By all the saints,” exclaimed the old man, “ is it not well known that I do not open my doors to any one ! ”

“ But, sir,” added Michael, “ this stranger appears to be a

respectable man, he is middle aged and good looking, and calls himself Nicolo Musso."

"What!" said Capuzzi, "this must be the manager of the theatre at the People's Gate? What can he want of me?"

Curiosity was so strong, that the Argus, after having pushed the bolts, went down to the door of his house.

"My venerable lord," said Nicolo, bowing humbly, "I do not know how to thank you for the honor you do me in granting me this interview; I have to thank you a thousand times, and I hasten to express to you the sincerity of my admiration. Since the day you came to my theatre, you, in whom Rome entire, knows the science and exquisitely artistic taste, the reputation of my pieces and the amount of my receipts have doubled. I am sorry to learn that bold bandits have assailed you on your return from your previous visit; but I supplicate you, Signor, not to make me suffer for this deplorable accident, by depriving my theatre of the presence of the most distinguished man that Rome has the honor of possessing."

At these words, the old man Capuzzi could not restrain his joy:

"Your theatre," exclaimed he; "yes, certainly I like it, and I render justice to the talent of your actors. But know you, master Nicolo, that I ran the risk of my life, with my illustrious friend, doctor Splendiano? Yes, certainly, your theatre amuses me infinitely, but accursed be a thousand times, the road that leads to it. Why don't you change your place? If you would go and establish yourself on the People's Square, in Babuina street or in Ripetta street, I would gladly become a frequenter; but all the devils in hell would not succeed in making me go again, during the night, into the vicinity of the People's Gate!"

"Alas, you will then ruin me, Signor Capuzzi!" replied Nicolo, in the tone of a discouraged man; "for it is upon you, my worthy protector, that reposed my whole prospect of success, and I came to solicit——"

"Solicit? What can I do for you?"

“ You can make me the happiest man in all Italy. You know how much the public are pleased with little plays interspersed with songs ; well, I thought of going to the expense of engaging an orchestra, and thus create, in spite of the rigorous limits of my privilege, a kind of opera. Now, you are in truth, Signor Capuzzi, the first composer in Italy ; and the fashionable world of Rome must have lost their wits, or your rivals are very powerful, in order that any other pieces than yours should be played in our theatres. And I, Signor, dared to take the liberty to beg of you to grant me the right to have them represented, with all the care in my power, on my humble stage.”

Master Pasquale, puffed with pride on listening to the fine speech of Nicolo, made a thousand excuses for having so long conversed with him at the door, and begged him to enter his house, where they could continue at their ease, so agreeable an interview. When they were carefully shut up in a distant closet, the old man took from a mouldy old chest an enormous packet of music strangely scrawled, and, taking down a cracked guitar, began to stun poor Nicolo with his frightful bellowings.

The unfortunate manager devoted himself bravely ; he stamped, clapped his hands, and raved like a person undergoing exorcism, crying out as loud as he could shout :

“ Bravo, bravissimo ! Benedettissimo Capuzzi ! ”

He carried the demonstrations of his magnificent enthusiasm so far, that, rolling himself on the floor, like a worm, he began to pinch and bite the legs of the unfortunate Capuzzi, who bounded with pain and howled out :

“ By all the saints in heaven, leave me, master Nicolo, you hurt me horribly ! ”

“ No, Signor Pasquale,” cried Nicolo, “ I will not let you go until you give me that divine air which enchants me, and which I wish to have Formica, my best actor, learn for tomorrow’s representation ! ”

“ I have then found a man capable of appreciating me,”

said Pasquale, trying to save his legs from the torture that Nicolo was inflicting upon him. "But, for God's sake, leave me, master Nicolo, and carry away with you all of my master-pieces."

"No!" still cried the crazy manager, "I will not leave you until you have promised and sworn to honor my theatre to-morrow, by your presence! Fear nothing for your safety; I am sure that the whole audience, after having heard your admirable music, will lead you back in triumph to your house; I myself, with my faithful comrades,—I will escort you with torches, and the malignant devils who dare to make us draw our rapiers had better beware!"

"Truly, truly will you do this?" murmured the happy Capuzzi, ready to burst with pride; "and I shall hear Formica who has such a fine voice, sing my best pieces? Well, master Nicolo, I promise you to go to your theatre to-morrow."

Nicolo arose lightly, like a victorious wrestler, and clasped Capuzzi's carcase in his arms so vigorously, that he nearly suffocated him.

At this moment Marianna appeared. The jealous old man threw a quick glance towards her to make her retire, but the young girl had recognized the manager of the theatre at the People's Gate.

"It is in vain, sir," said she to him in an angry tone, "it is in vain that you try to attract my excellent uncle to your bar-rack; I will not suffer him to expose himself again to a nocturnal attack like that which was near costing our learned friend Splendiano his life, and which nearly rendered this dear uncle a victim to his devotedness in saving my life and my honor. Do not hope for my consent, master Nicolo; and you, dear uncle, do not give me the pain of knowing you threatened again by some diabolical ambush."

Capuzzi fixed upon his niece his great red eyes, with a look of surprise; but it was in vain that he detailed all the precautions that the obliging Nicolo offered to take for his safety; Marianna remained inflexible.

“ I will not,” said she, “ allow myself to be contradicted ; I am still sick with fright ; and at no price will I allow you to go and hear the finest singing of Formica. It may be that this master Nicolo is in league with that bandit Antonio Scacciati ; and I strongly suspect——”

“ Good God ! what an idea ! ” continued Nicolo, with a vivacity which admitted of no reply ; “ could you suppose, Signora, that I was capable of being in so cowardly a plot ? But if my word is not sufficient to tranquillize you, why not have Michael and a good company of police accompany you, to watch around the theatre ? ”

“ This proposition reconciles me to you,” said Marianna ; “ excuse me for having doubted your loyal intentions ; but an affectionate niece is allowed to tremble for the safety of so dear a relation ; and notwithstanding the possibility of procuring an escort, I beg of him to remain prudently at home.”

Pasquale had listened to this conversation with an expression on his face which sufficiently testified the hesitation of his thoughts. When Marianna had finished speaking, he embraced her with truly picturesque affection, and exclaimed, with tears in his eyes :

“ Divine, adorable creature ! this care that thou takest in all that concerns me is the sweetest confession for my heart of the secret sentiments which modesty hides in thy breast ! Banish all fear, dear angel, and do not deny thyself the joy of hearing the applause which will crown thy beloved uncle’s master-pieces, the glorious name of which will fly to-morrow from mouth to mouth, until they shall reach the ears of remotest posterity ! ”

Thanks to the entreaties of Nicolo, Marianna ended by yielding, promising to go herself to the brilliant representation of Formica. The soul of Pasquale Capuzzi already swam in heavenly delight ; but he wanted, to complete his happiness, other witnesses than Marianna ; he wished to take with him willingly or unwillingly doctor Pyramid and Pitichinaccio, but the success of this feat was slightly doubtful.

Splendiano had dreamed strange dreams, during his lethargy at the foot of the pyramid of Cestius. The bodies of all his patients had arisen from their graves to torment him, and, since that fatal night, he had been oppressed with a superstitious sadness which nothing could dissipate. As for Pitichinaccio, this unfortunate abortion had become well convinced that real devils had assailed his master, and the remembrance alone of this event made him utter frightened cries. Capuzzi had vainly endeavored to prove to him that the devils were no other than accursed Christians, such as Salvator, Antonio and their friends. Pitichinaccio was moved to tears at finding himself thus contradicted; he swore by the great Eternal that the devil Fanfarell had struck him with his horns, that he had recognized him; and, to prove what he said, he showed his back, tattooed with livid spots.

Splendiano, who prided himself upon his reasoning, and being of a strong mind, first came to the decision to revisit the theatre, after having piously provided himself with a relic, which had been given him by a Bernardian monk. Pitichinaccio allowed himself to be seduced, less by the example of the doctor than by a promise of a box of preserved grapes; but it was farther agreed that Capuzzi should allow him to free himself for that evening of his duenna's petticoats, and put on his new coat, made from the best portion of his master's old doublets.

The success of the project which Salvator had formed, wholly depended on the possibility of separating Capuzzi and Marianna at the theatre. The two friends exhausted themselves in seeking the means of avoiding the presence of Splendiano and Pitichinaccio. Chance, which often remains deaf to our most anxious desires, seemed on this occasion to favor Salvator and Antonio, for the man made use of by Providence was precisely the one from whom they had most to fear, Michael, the bravo.

The following night, a frightful noise aroused the inhabitants of Ripetta street. A squad of police who were seeking

an escaped convict, arrived at the scene of action with torches. They found the unfortunate Pitichinaccio, lying on the ground amongst broken violins, without signs of life, whilst Michael was showering blows on the shoulders of doctor Pyramid.

In the midst of this nocturnal disturbance, Pasquale Capuzzi, drawing his long rapier, was about, with a furious thrust, to pierce through and through the redoubtable Michael, if some of the police had not thrown themselves between them. The light of the torches then showed the mistake; old Capuzzi stood still on the spot, in stupid astonishment, his eyes staring, his forehead purple, and his moustache in disorder. Splendiano and the abortion Pitichinaccio had been so badly treated, that they were taken up much bruised, and carried to their homes, scarcely alive.

Here is what caused this adventure. I have elsewhere related that Salvator and Antonio had given Marianna a brilliant serenade under her balcony in Ripetta street. The success which they had, and the welcome of the neighborhood, had inspired them with the idea of giving this gallant concert every night. Master Capuzzi, in despair at their audacity, which did not leave him a moment's repose, went and complained to the city authorities, and begged them to forbid the two artists disturbing his tranquillity. The magistrates, after having carefully weighed the matter, decided that it was impossible to prevent the inhabitants from practising so agreeable an art as music, and besides, a like prohibition, before unheard of, would anger the populace in the highest degree. Capuzzi, furious at the little support afforded him by the authorities, could imagine nothing better than to take the responsibility of vengeance into his own hands. He took into his confidence the ex-bravo, Michael, a man ready for anything, as I have before said, and proposed to him to aid in his revenge, in consideration of a pretty round sum which he promised to give him.

The assassin, well satisfied with such a prospect, provided himself with an oak staff, sufficiently solid, to expedite, in

case of need, several individuals. This man, seduced by the glitter of the sequins, began to keep a vigilant nocturnal watch. But his expectation was without result ; for, from the commencement, nobody came within reach of his blows. Salvator and Antonio, busied with their approaching expedition to the theatre at the People's Gate, had, from that very day, discontinued the serenades under Capuzzi's balcony. Marianna, who suspected nothing, complained of this deprivation ; she graciously avowed to her uncle that she felt nothing but antipathy towards Salvator and Antonio, she did not think herself, on that account, compelled to give up her taste for music, and that she greatly regretted the loss of the symphonies which the two artists executed so well. The unfortunate Capuzzi, believing that his conquest was assured if he succeeded in restoring to his ward the evening concerts which she was pleased to like, ran to seek his two advisers, in order to organize, with their assistance, a serenade of his own composition, for the following night.

This night, which was to advance his affairs so much, was the evening before the day that he was to offer a fresh proof of devotion to her least desires, by conducting her to Nicolo Musso's theatre. All seemed to be going on well ; unfortunately, too much distracted by his happiness, Capuzzi had forgotten the frightful orders which he had so vigorously given to master Michael ; so that, as soon as he had gone cautiously from his house, had taken his place, with Splendiano and the dwarf, under the shadow of the opposite house, and as soon as a first and fatal prelude had awoke the silence of the night, the bravo, who was prowling about, cursing fortune which seemed to refuse him his victims, fell like a thunder clap upon our amateurs, who were far from thinking about him, and came near killing them, as I have just related.

This famous mistake delivered the artists from two obstacles. Doctor Accoramboni dreamed in his bed of the pyramid of Cestius, and Pitichinaccio thought that his last hour had come. Capuzzi tried to oppose bad fortune with a good heart alone ;

it was excessively repugnant to his vanity to have it believed that he had received his share of the blows so liberally distributed by Michael ; besides, his finest opera was to be represented at Nicolo's theatre,—and nothing more was necessary to have recalled him from the other world.

Whilst he was preparing for this ovation, Salvator and Antonio were taking measures to lead to the successful abduction of Marianna.

“ You will succeed, I am sure of it, and I will answer for it with my head,” said Salvator to his friend ; “ receive, then, my best wishes for your happiness, in spite of the vain instinct of fear which seizes me at the thought of this marriage.”

“ What do you say,” exclaimed Antonio, “ what do you say, dear master ? ”

“ I ought not to trouble you by my ideas concerning this marriage ; and yet are you not free to treat these ideas as chimerical or foolish dreamings ? I love woman, dear Antonio ; but indeed, I tell you, that the most seductive, she for whom I should feel the most exalted passion, could not chase from my fearing mind those doubts, those apprehensions in which the conjugal ties are enveloped to my eyes. There is, do you see, in the nature of all women, I know not what mysterious machinery, which the science of the most skilful men cannot penetrate the secret of. She, by whose charms we have allowed ourselves to be caught, she who appears to have given herself to us with the truest, the most devoted passion, is often the first to betray her sworn faith and rend, without scruple, the compact of a union which ought to be eternal. It is my sad experience which makes me dread for you, my friend, some future sorrow which there would, perhaps, be time to avoid.”

“ But I dare not,” replied Antonio, “ I will no longer listen to you. Who then would dare to suspect my beautiful, my pure Marianna ? ”

“ No one, assuredly,” continued Salvator ; “ your Marianna is an angel of beauty and virtue ; but it is precisely the ineffa-

ble charm of her whole person which makes me tremble for your future peace. Still again, dear friend, distrust the capricious nature of women ; and, since you force me to explain, have you not until now reflected on the conduct of Marianna herself ? Have you forgot the duplicity of this pretty child, whose simplicity you admire ? Remember the night that we carried old Capuzzi home ; the tender ward, did she not play her part towards him like a finished actress ? And still later, are you ignorant of the art that she knew how to assume, at the time of Nicolo Musso's visit ? Say and maintain what you please, and you will not be the less convinced of the cunning of this little Marianna, to cajole her uncle and put at rest his suspicions ; it exceeds all trickery imaginable at so tender an age. She has in reality overcome all the obstacles which might retard the success of our projects. I do not pretend to say that towards this old fool Capuzzi all tricks are not legitimate. All is fair in war, says the proverb ; but it is not the less possible that——”

“ Hold, Antonio, let us stop here, I pray you ; I don't know, perhaps, what I am saying ; do not be offended with me, for I wish nothing but your most perfect felicity with the young girl that you love. Let us think of nothing but the success of the plan which we have formed.”

The evening that saw Pasquale Capuzzi take the road, for a second time, with Marianna, towards Formica's theatre, seemed to light up by the rays of the setting sun, the march of an unfortunate, whom an irresistible law drew towards a torture. Before them gravely walked, with an extremely repulsive look, the terrible Michael, armed at all points, like a paladin of ancient times. Behind the trembling couple was scattered a score of police, each one under the strictest orders.

Master Nicolo Musso awaited the illustrious composer at the door of his theatre. The house was filled with spectators, and he hastened to conduct Capuzzi and his charming niece to the places of honor which had been provided for them.—

Signor Pasquale was much pleased by the particular attention of which he was the object ; his red eyes glanced from side to side with radiant pride ; and his satisfaction was boundless, when, after a minute inspection of every part of the room, he saw that all the seats near that of Marianna were occupied by women. An orchestra composed of five or six violins and a base, was hidden behind the ragged tapestry which formed the decoration of the stage. Master Capuzzi trembled with hope, whilst listening to hear the unknown artists torment their instruments into an accord ; when, after waiting an hour, a formidable flourish of the bow announced that the performances were about to commence, the whole of his aged frame was seized with a galvanic trembling.

Signor Formica first appeared on the stage, dressed like Pasquale. As soon as he opened his mouth, Capuzzi rubbed his eyes to assure himself that he was not dreaming. The actor copied with sorrowful exactitude the features and the figure, without excepting one single ridiculous point, of the inhabitant of Ripetta street, so well known in the city, that an unavoidable homeric laugh resounded through the house. They rolled upon the seats in a delirium ; uttering deafening shouts. Unfortunately, the object of this boisterous hilarity, far from prudently escaping, took this parade for a delicate attention from his friend Nicolo. He found his representative enchanting, adorable ; he listened to Formica's singing with transports of pleasure difficult to describe.

Silence and calm were restored when the false Pasquale had finished his opening air ; and doctor Graziano was seen to come from behind the screens, whose part, for this once, Nicolo himself had assumed. This personage approached, stopping his ears and making a despairing grimace.

"Rogue," cried he to Capuzzi's valet, "will you ever stop your bellowing ?"

"Softly, my master," replied Pasquarello, "I see that you are no better than the rest of the inhabitants of my quarter, hard heads, who understand nothing in melody, and

who wither by their illiterate criticisms the most distinguished talent in Italy ! The air that I have just sung is from the most celebrated composer of our age, whom I have the honor to serve, in the capacity of valet, and who pays me generously in lessons of *sofeggio* and singing ! ”

At these words, Graziano began to enumerate, by their names, all the known artists ; but, at each celebrated name Pasquarello shook his head disdainfully.

“ Foolish animal ! ” said he, drawing himself up ; “ is it necessary to submit to the judgment of such appreciators ? ”

“ What, do you not even know what all the world proclaims, that the most admirable musician of our time is no other than Signor Pasquale Capuzzi di Senegaglia, who has deigned to do me the honor to accept me for his humble valet ? ”

Graziano burst out laughing at the extravagance of his questioner.

“ Ingrate, do-nothing ! ” exclaimed he, “ dost thou not blush at having quitted my service, which gave you bread, honest wages and blows, to go and scout with the most notorious miser in all Rome, with a kind of maccaroni bag, with a double ass, who tries to look like a virtuoso, and only knows how to bray day and night, to the great discomfort of all Ripetta street ! ”

“ Miserable envier,” replied Pasquarello ; and, turning his back on his abusive adversary, he branched off into an interminable panegyric on Capuzzi, in which he took care not to forget the description of his physical advantages, seasoned with such burlesque features, that the hilarity of the spectators rose to its utmost height. But Capuzzi alone comprehended nothing of this parody. He was ready to die for joy, and felt himself avenged for what he called, in his own breast, the injustice of his cotemporaries.

At this moment, the scene at the end of the stage opened to give entrance to a caricature of Capuzzi in person, copied, mask and dress, with the most minute fidelity. It was his

bearing, his look and his gait : the whole appeared so real, that the true Capuzzi, frozen by fear at this unexpected apparition, allowed Marianna's hand to escape from his grasp, which he had until then kept upon it, and began to feel of himself from head to foot, to see if he was still in the land of the living, and if the personage who was advancing on the stage was a spectre or his ghost.

The false Capuzzi began by kissing Graziano tenderly upon both cheeks, then he asked him how he was. The doctor smiled, and, taking the attitude of a conqueror, answered that his health was perfect, but that his purse was extremely sick ; that he had, the night before, purchased for the queen of his thoughts, a magnificent pair of flame-colored stockings, the price of which had ruined him ; and that if he did not find, that very day, some Jew who would lend him thirty ducats, his reputation as a man of gallantry would be gone forever, and he should lose his lady.

"Thirty ducats, my dear friend !" exclaimed the unknown, who so well represented the lean figure of Capuzzi, "thirty ducats ! is that all ? and must you really be troubled about such a trifle as that ! Here, my estimable friend, here are fifty, that I beg you will accept out of love for me."

"Pasquale, Pasquale ! what art thou doing ? thou wilt ruin thyself," murmured in a low voice the veritable Capuzzi, moving uneasily upon his seat.

Master Graziano, the fashionable doctor, drew a parchment from his pocket to write a receipt upon ; but the Capuzzi resisted and would not listen to his talk about receipts and interest for a loan which was not worth, as he said, the trouble of thinking about for two minutes.

"Pasquale, my friend, thou art losing thy wits," continued Capuzzi, half aloud. Notwithstanding, doctor Graziano secured the loan, and loaded with caresses, with which he appeared to wish to suffocate the false Capuzzi. Then the clown, approaching him in a very humble manner, and exhausting himself in the most extravagant salutations, held

out his hand timidly, as if to solicit the wages already due him. The false Capuzzi in a vein of good humor, threw him a few ducats and a multitude of fine promises for the future.

"Pasquale, Pasquale! thou art yielding thyself to the devil *Prodigality!*" cried out the veritable Capuzzi, so loudly, that the whole audience called out for him to be quiet, with a threat to throw him out should he again disturb the play.

The clown gravely continued his eulogium on the fine qualities of his master, and judged that the time was appropriate to announce to the public a new air from this great master. The false Capuzzi, clapping his companion on the shoulder, said to him, with a look ridiculously cunning, enough to make Egyptian mummies die laughing, that the office of singing Signor Pasquale Capuzzi di Senegaglia's music was just suited to a valet, seeing that the pretended virtuoso Capuzzi found it infinitely convenient to dress himself up in the peacock's feathers; and copied all through, from the works of Frescobaldi and Carissimi, pieces which he afterwards appropriated with unheard of effrontery.

The attack was rude; its effect was irresistible. "Thou liest, by all the saints thou liest!" howled the veritable Capuzzi, bounding with fury upon his seat, where all the neighbors exerted their strength to restrain him and prevent him from springing upon the stage.

"Let us talk about something else," continued, without being disconcerted, the false Capuzzi. "I will offer to my numerous friends and admirers a royal festival, and I order thee, Pasquarello, to expend thy imagination, thy arms, and thy legs, so that nothing shall be wanting on this solemn occasion."

Then, taking a list of the most exquisite dishes from his pocket, he called them out one after the other; and, when the faithful valet announced the price, he gave him the money without discussion. When the bill of fare for the feast was settled upon, Pasquarello begged his master to tell him for what occasion he ordered so splendid an entertainment.

“ It is because to-morrow is the most fortunate day of my life. To-morrow, Pasquarello, I will give my beautiful Marianna in marriage to the most celebrated painter in Rome, after the great Salvator ; to the good and worthy Antonio Scacciati, whom she loves with her whole heart.”

The false Capuzzi had hardly finished pronouncing these words, when the real Capuzzi, struggling like a madman in the hands of the people, who tried to keep him in his seat, made the house resound with such furious clamors, that four or five women fainted with fear. He rose to his fullest height before the actor who thus abused him.

“ Vile impostor,” cried he to him, “ thou liest like an accursed rogue ! Antonio Scacciati is a beggar, who shall never have my sweet Marianna ! And thou canst tell him from me, that if he ever shows himself at my door, I will have him skinned alive and thrown to the dogs ! ”

“ What does this mean, old madman ! old devil’s boarder ? ” interrupted the false Capuzzi from the stage. “ Is it allowable for a citizen thus to disturb the joy of peaceable people who have paid at the door of the theatre, to hear the praises of the venerable Pasquale Capuzzi di Senegaglia ? Is there not here some brave policeman who will free us from thy stupid presence, old counterfeiter, who art trying to pass thyself off for the most illustrious man in Ripetta street ? Dare to oppose the happiness of these dear children that heaven appears to have created for each other——”

At the same time Marianna and Antonio were seen advancing on the stage, their hands joined, a smile on their faces, and their eyes animated with the sweetest contentment that fortunate love can bestow. At the sight of this, Capuzzi felt his strength redoubled by rage ; with a more vigorous bound than would have been expected from a man of his size, he found himself standing before them on the stage, and drawing his rapier, he was about to stab the person of Antonio Scacciati, when a nervous hand, seizing his arm, prevented him from committing a useless murder. An officer of the

pope's guard arrested him, and, proceeding into an examination of the affair, said to him roughly :

" You will never in your life forget the unfortunate part you have played to-night in Nicolo Musso's theatre."

The surprise of the old man was extreme when the two actors, whom he had taken for Antonio and Marianna, taking off their masks, exhibited faces entirely unknown to him.—The sword fell from his hand, a cold perspiration moistened his wrinkled cheeks, and he carried his hands to his forehead, as if to pluck from his brain the last impression of a frightful nightmare. A painful instinct made him tremble in every limb, when, on recovering from this hallucination, he sought for his niece at his side and found her no longer there. His despair at this would have awakened pity in the most insensible heart.

Whilst this comedy, sadly burlesque, ended the performances by a scene which came near being bloody, another drama was approaching its denouement in a corner of the room.

The veritable Antonio, profiting by the confusion which he had so successfully caused between Capuzzi and the actors, very adroitly made his way behind the spectators to Marianna, and told her in a few words, to tranquillize her, the trick which had been played, by the assistance of Salvator, to triumph over the obstinacy of her jealous guardian. Time pressed, and the entreaties of Antonio threw the poor girl into a cruel perplexity. The thought of flying with her beloved, without being united to him by the sacred ties of marriage, frightened her. And then, although she had so little reason to be pleased with the proceedings of Capuzzi, she nevertheless respected in him the man to whom her dying father had confided her. It seemed to her that she could not, without odious ingratitude, which would wither her reputation forever, thus abandon the old man, who had, after all, no other fault to reproach himself with towards her than a ridiculous love, and a jealousy which she had sufficiently trifled with. Antonio had the

greatest difficulty in overcoming her hesitation ; every minute lost might forever separate them. Marianna understood this as well as he did himself. She wept in silence ; a convulsive trembling agitated her limbs ; a cloud passed over her eyes ; the artist felt her falling ; immediately profiting by the tumult and confusion which filled the place, he carried the young girl off in his arms, covering her with tears and kisses. A carriage which was waiting a short distance from Nicolo's theatre, received the lovers, and carried them off with lightning speed, on the road to Florence.

No words can express the exasperation of poor Capuzzi. He tried to hasten in pursuit of the odious ravisher of his niece. But the officer of the guard who had possession of his person, surrounded him with soldiers, and said to him coldly :

“Justice will inform herself concerning the carrying off and seduction of which you complain. As for you, I cannot, by my private authority, set you at liberty : you must immediately answer to the magistrate for your attempt at murder on the person of the young actor whom you were about so expeditiously to forward, had it not been for my interference. Let us walk, if you please, and do not force me to pull you by the ears.”

IV.

All things here below, alas ! are nothing but uncertainty and perpetual change ; but nothing is more variable than man's heart. Such a one sees himself to-day the object of general sympathy and veneration, and to-morrow may fall into the abyss of adversity and contempt, without any one of his flatterers deigning to extend a hand to aid him.

As long as Capuzzi had only been ridiculous, there was not in the whole of Rome a single person, of whatever age or rank, who did not take a malicious pleasure in laughing at his avarice, and the ridiculousness of his eccentric life. But as

soon as misfortune had struck him, as soon as the news of the elopement of Marianna was spread far and near, nothing else was thought of but sincere pity for the poor old man. When he was seen mournful and pensive, going about, bowed down by grief, through the most solitary streets in the city, every one felt compassion for so legitimate a grief, and heartily cursed the author of a ravishment which raised indignation in every family.

Never, perhaps, was the saying truer, that misfortunes seldom come single. Capuzzi had to deplore, some days after this fatal event, the loss of his two most intimate acquaintances; the abortion, Pitchinaccio, was the victim of an indigestion, and doctor Splendiano Accoramboni died of a mistake in spelling. Whilst he was so grievously sick, in consequence of the beating he had received from Michael the bravo, he tried to write for himself, through the bed curtains, a prescription for medicine; but his hand trembled so much, that an exaggerated stroke of the pen, lengthening beyond measure the tail of an important letter, raised to a fatal degree a dose of sublimate which helped to make up the remedy. Hardly had the doctor swallowed it, when he uttered piercing cries and writhed in horrible convulsions. He was buried under the pyramid of Cestius, in the midst of the numerous patients who, by his care, had long since preceded him.

It is curious to remark that the severest blame which was attached to the carrying off of Marianna did not fall entirely upon Antonio Scacciati. Everybody knew the active part that Salvator had taken in the success of this unfortunate accident. This accusation rendered him, in the eyes of families, a very dangerous associate, and cut off his access to the best houses in the city. His enemies, and his talents rendered them numerous, did not allow this opportunity of decrying him to escape. They went so far as to impute to him the most odious acts; they pretended that he had escaped from Naples to avoid the just chastisement of the most revolting excesses,

and that, if the authorities did not take care, he would become the accomplice of the most evil disposed people.

All these accumulated reports, all these criminations still more perfidious, since they were only founded upon vain hypothesis, were spread with sufficient rapidity to gravely prejudice the interests and reputation of the great artist. Salvator who, since the departure of Antonio had shut himself up in his studio, produced several paintings of rare merit, and which ought to have stamped his genius with a seal of glory. But thanks to the calumnies which enviers spread abroad unceasingly, it came into fashion to decry his works, as they decried his reputation ; and in public exhibitions of paintings, pretended rivals to Salvator, people of the academy of San-Luca, and simple amateurs, no longer examined his paintings without shrugging their shoulders or shaking their heads with a most disdainful look. To listen to these gentlemen, sometimes the skies were too blue, or sometimes the trees were too green, or the figures were in a bad position, and then perspective was wanting. Every one had his say, and no one was sparing of his criticism.

The vain members of the college of San-Luca were not the least anxious for the ruin of Salvator ; they could not pardon him for the triumph of having discovered the *Magdalen* of Antonio Scacciati. And painting was soon no longer an object for the hate of these miserable detractors. Salvator wrote sonnets admirably poetical ; and they did not scruple to call him a plagiarist, and cowardly to appropriate the originality of his works. No one thought of remedying these wrongs, so strong was the deplorable prejudice which attached itself to the name of Salvator, since the adventures in Ripetta street. Thus his position, far from regaining its former brilliancy, became every day more precarious. Confined in the modest home which the devoted friendship of dame Catherine preserved to him, under the weight of this anathema, the artist felt that he was failing ; and it was under this discouragement that he finished two pictures of large di-

mensions, which were talked of throughout Rome. One of these pictures represented the emblem of Human Frailty; the principal figure, type of inconstancy and luxury, was manifestly a portrait of the mistress of one of the princes of the Church.

The other picture was a representation of Fortune, scattering her gifts as chance directed; her hand rained down in profusion cardinal's caps, bishop's mitres, purses filled with gold, and insignia of public honors; all these distinctions fell upon donkeys, upon stupid sheep; whilst by the side of these animals, men whose eyes shone with the fire of genius, vainly awaited the least part of these favors. The work of Salvator expressed a bitter irony, and each one of these animals bore a striking resemblance in feature to the physiognomy of some of his enemies. I leave you to think by what rage the academicians of San-Luca were animated at the sight of this.—Not content with every where decrying his talent, they laid plots against his life. Salvator would have been glad to leave Rome, had it not been for the deep affection which he cherished for the good Catherine and her two daughters.

Forced to yield to a dire necessity, he set out for Florence, where the welcome of the Grand-Duke rendered justice to the brilliancy of his genius. His pictures here met with such rapid favor, that he soon found himself able to reëstablish his affairs on the former footing of splendor which he had enjoyed. His house became the resort of the most celebrated persons of the time; there were seen together there Evangelista Coricelli, Valerio Chimentelli, Battista Ricciardi, Andrea Cavalcanti, Pietro Salvati, Phillippo Apoloni, Vulumnio Bandelli and Francesco Rovai, all poets and artists whose reputation was crowned by the friendship of Salvator.

At a short distance from his friend's palace, master Antonio Scacciati was making his fortune under the auspices of love. They both loved to pass together, with the pretty Marianna, long hours in recalling the adventures of Nicolo's theatre.—Marianna alone did not always share their joy; her loving

heart was pained at the idea that Capuzzi, the brother of her father, abandoned by her, urged by grief towards the tomb; would curse her in his last moments. Antonio could not see the tears of his beloved without seeking anxiously some means of reconciliation with his strange relation. Salvator for a long time consoled them with the hope, that some fortunate circumstance would soon reunite them, when one morning Antonio rushed into the studio like a madman, crying out:—

“ My friend, my guardian angel, what shall I do if you abandon me ! Capuzzi has just arrived at Florence with an order for my arrest, as the ravisher of his niece ! ”

“ But it is too late,” said Salvator ; “ the Church, has it not blessed your marriage ? ”

“ The Church itself cannot save me. The old devil has made his way to the pope ; and he flatters himself with being able to annul my marriage, and obtain a dispensation for his own.”

“ I recognize in this a vengeance from Rome ! This poor pontiff is surrounded by flatterers who do everything to blind him ; and because I figured in my satire *Fortune* their ignoble faces, under the features of animals that resembled them, not being able to injure me, their impotence leads them to attack me in the persons of my friends. That is the secret of the persecution which disturbs you. But calm yourself, re-assure yourself, Salvator remains devoted to you, and Signor Formica shall undertake again to rescue you in this affair ! Return to Marianna, take to her from me friendly and consolatory words to sustain her courage, and peaceably await the issue of the plan which I am about to follow.”

Antonio, subjected by the ascendancy of Salvator, obeyed without reply. The same day Pasquale Capuzzi received a ceremonious invitation in the name of the *Accademia de Percozzì*.

“ Thank God ! ” exclaimed he, in an ecstacy of pride, “ Florence is a wise city where every talent finds its place,

and judges fit to appreciate it; Florence has then rendered justice to the works of Master Capuzzi di Senegaglia!"

The self-esteem of the old man was so flattered by a distinction which he took seriously, that, without caring more about his spite against Salvator, president of the *Accademia de Percossi*, he took pains to hasten, in full dress, to meet the honors which awaited him. The Spanish doublet was thoroughly brushed, the yellow feather for the hat was cleaned, the shoes were embellished with new rosettes, and the man of Ripetta street, followed by his rapier, bounded from his hotel to the palace inhabited by Salvator Rosa, before whom his gratitude displayed itself by numerous reverential bows.

Capuzzi's reception was so well arranged that he thought himself at the height of glory. After the academic session, during which every one praised the exquisite penetration of his judgment, the wit which shone, said they, in his least words, he was invited to a splendid banquet, where several glasses of generous wine drowned in sweet forgetfulness his domestic grief, and the important business which had drawn him to Florence. Profiting by this blissful state, Salvator hastened to arrange, with the assistance of his friends, a little play, with which he proposed to entertain his guest. At a given signal, the draperies which ornamented the lower part of the room were drawn slowly aside, and there appeared, as if by magic, a natural bower covered with flowers.

"Divine goodness!" exclaimed Capuzzi. "What do I see? That is Nicolo Musso's theatre!"

Without replying to him, two of the guests, Evangelista Coricelli and Andrea Cavalcanti, took him by the arms, and drew him softly towards an arm-chair, placed for him in front of the stage on which the play was about to be enacted.—Almost immediately Signor Formica appeared, in the dress of a clown.

"Accursed Formica!" exclaimed Capuzzi, springing from his place, with his fist clenched. But his two neighbors, who

had not quitted him, forced him to be seated again. The clown weeping bitterly, spoke of cutting his throat or drowning himself in the Tiber; but, unfortunately, the sight of blood irritated his nerves, and, on the other hand, he thought that he could not throw himself into the water without immediately beginning to swim.

Then doctor Graziano came upon the stage, and asked him the cause of his grief.

"Alas!" said Pasquarello, "are you ignorant then, that a vile scoundrel has carried off honest Signor Pasquale Capuzzi di Senegaglia's niece?"

"But," replied Graziano, "has justice not placed her hand upon this guilty man?"

"Yes, certainly," said Pasquarello, "as cunning as he may be, Antonio Scacciati could not escape the chastisement prepared for him by the worthy Signor Capuzzi. Antonio is arrested, his secret marriage with the pretty Marianna is declared null by the Holy Father, and the fugitive dove has gone back to Capuzzi's cage."

"What! can it be true!" exclaimed Pasquale, seeking to shake off the grasp of his neighbors, "that beggar Antonio is under key? Oh Formica, I bless thee!"

"Be so kind as not to move about so," said one of the guardians of the poor madman, gravely; "your cries prevent the other spectators from enjoying the spectacle."

Doctor Graziano continued his questions:—"The pope," answered Pasquarello, "has given the necessary dispensation for the marriage of Capuzzi with Marianna. All is ended! But the poor child has pined since this fatal marriage, and Capuzzi is slowly killing her by his jealousy."

Whilst listening to this conversation, Capuzzi raved like a demoniac, but his two neighbors held fast and did not allow him to escape. Suddenly, Pasquarello exclaimed in a lamentable voice, that Marianna was dead. At the same time funeral voices uttered a formidable *de profundis* in the dis-

tance, then the black penitents made the circuit of the stage carrying an open bier, on which reposed, under a white shroud, the remains of the unfortunate Marianna. An actor, disguised in the costume and mask of Capuzzi, followed weepingly this sad procession. The true Capuzzi could not resist this spectacle, and his lamentations mingled with the sobs of the actors. The stage suddenly becomes dark, the thunder roars, the earth opens, and a spectre is seen to rise, whose pale visage represents Marianna's father.

"Miserable brother!" slowly uttered the citizen of the other world; "what hast thou done with my child? God curses thee, murderer of Marianna! Hell awaits thee!"

Under the blow of this terrible threat, the false Capuzzi fell upon the ground, and the real Capuzzi really fainted. When he came to himself, his despair was pitiable; he wrung his hands and tore his garments.

"Ah, my poor child!" exclaimed he, "my beloved Marianna! I have killed thee! I am an unfortunate man! An infamous man!"

Had this crisis lasted longer, the good man would have lost his reason. Salvator made a sign: Antonio and Marianna, who had advanced behind the arm-chair, threw themselves at Capuzzi's feet. Marianna, covering his hands with kisses and tears, implored her pardon and that of Antonio, who belonged to her before God. At this sight, the paleness of Capuzzi's face gave place to a tint of scarlet, his eyes flashed like lightning, and his mouth was made up to utter curses.—But Marianna, with a heavenly look, stopped the thunder:

"My uncle," said she, her hands joined, "pardon for him, pardon for me; do not separate us if you do not wish that I should die!"

And without giving him time to answer, all present exclaimed:—"How can the illustrious Signor Pasquale Capuzzi di Senegaglia, the great master, who is the pride of Italy, resist the tears, the prayers of the most beautiful of women,

who implores him as a father ! How can he refuse to grant his niece to Antonio Scacciati the painter, whose glory already equals his genius ! ”

The most intense emotion made the whole of Capuzzi's frame palpitate : a violent combat was taking place in his soul. Finally, tenderness triumphed over anger. He opened his arms to Antonio and his niece, who fell at his feet. When they rose again, there was no longer before them either Pasquarello, or Formica ; the actor, who had filled this part with unanimous applause, had thrown off his mask and his disguise, henceforth useless.

“ What, Salvator ! It was you ! ” exclaimed at once Capuzzi, Antonio and Marianna.

“ Yes, my friends,” said the great artist, “ yes, it was I who played this part for your happiness ! It was I ; for a year, the Romans, who despised my pictures and my poetry, covered me every evening with frenzied applause at the theatre of the People's Gate, without suspecting that, under the mask of poor Formica, was hidden the despised artist, whose vengeance punished their foibles. But I forgive the Romans, on your account ! ”

“ Master Salvator,” said Capuzzi, “ all the Romans were not unjust towards you ; for I, I have always admired your genius, although until now detesting your person. Obtain, then, for me from your friend Antonio, the permission to end my days under the same roof with my dear Marianna. I do not believe that he can ever be jealous of me, even should he sometimes see me adventure a kiss on the pretty little hand of my niece. An uncle is nearly a father, especially at my age ; and we shall be, henceforth, the best friends in the world, if Antonio promises, besides this, to curl my gray moustache himself, every Sunday ; it is a little deference which I require, and which, I hope, will not humiliate him.”

A thousand kisses from the pretty Marianna immediately sealed this happy compact of a forgetfulness of the past.

Salvator Rosa, in a melancholy attitude, seemed to reflect whilst contemplating his work. God alone knows the mysterious thought which clouded for a moment the features of the great artist.

Capuzzi was joyful, when Antonio undertook to arrange his venerable moustache in the most tasteful manner ; but he would never set foot again in his house in Ripetta street.

CARDILLAC, THE JEWELLER.

Das Fräulein von Scuderi.

Scrapions. Scuderi, Th. Heel, Kimpel
ed. vol. 1/ CHAPTER I.

* IN the Rue St. Honoré in Paris, during the reign of Louis XIV. was situated a small house, inhabited by Magdalene de Scuderi, the celebrated poetess, well known to the public, both through her literary productions, and the distinctions conferred on her by the King, and the gay Marchioness de Maintenon.

Very late one night, (it might be the autumn of the year 1680,) there was heard at the door of this house a violent knocking, which echoed through the whole corridor. Baptiste, a man-servant, who, in the small establishment of the lady, represented cook, valet, and porter, had, by her permission, gone into the country to attend his sister's wedding, and thus it happened that de Scuderi's waiting maid, la Martiniere, was alone, and the only person who now kept watch in the mansion. She heard the knocking repeated after a short silence, and suddenly the painful reflection came on her mind, that Baptiste was absent, and that she and her lady were left quite defenceless against any wicked intruder. All the stories of house-breaking, theft, and above all murder, which were then so frequent in Paris, crowded at once on her remembrance, and she became almost convinced that some band of assassins, aware of their lonely situation, were the cause of this disturbance. If rashly admitted, they would doubtless perpetrate some horrible outrage; so she staid in her room,

terrified and trembling, at the same time wishing in her heart Baptiste (or rather his sister and her wedding party) *au diable*.

Meanwhile the knocking continued to thunder on; and it seemed as if she distinguished a voice at intervals, crying out "Open the door, *pour l'amour de Dieu*,—open the door!—At last, in great agitation, Martiniere siezed the candle, and ran out into the corridor, where she plainly heard the stranger's voice, repeating anxiously and vehemently, "For God's sake open the door!" In truth," thought Martiniere, "no robber would speak in this manner; who knows whether it may not be some poor persecuted man, who seeks protection from my lady, knowing that she is ever inclined to succor the distressed? But let us be cautious." She now drew up a window that looked into the street, and called out, "Who is there, at such unseasonable hours, thundering at the gate, and rousing every one from sound sleep?" At the same time she endeavored to give as much as possible of a manly tone to her voice, which was naturally none of the weakest.

By the gleam of the moonlight, which just then broke through the clouds, she perceived a tall slim figure, attired in a light grey-colored mantle, and with a broad hat slouched over his features. Thinking to intimidate him, she called out within the house, but loudly, so that the stranger might hear her, "Baptiste—Claude—Pierre! rouse, and see what is the matter. Here is a good for nothing vagabond, who has been knocking as if he would break down the house about our ears." Then from without she was answered by the tones of a soft and plaintive voice. "Martiniere," said the stranger, "I know very well that it is you, however you may try to disguise your accents. I know too that Baptiste has gone into the country, and that you are alone in the house with your lady. Be not afraid, but open the door for me. You have nothing to apprehend; but I must absolutely speak with Mademoiselle de Scuderi, and this without a moment's delay." "What art thou thinking of?" answered Martiniere, angrily; "thou wouldst speak with my lady, forsooth, in the middle of

the night? Shouldst thou not recollect, that she must be long since asleep, and that I would not for the world disturb her rest, which, at her time of life, is so needful?"

"On the contrary," said the man from below, "I know very well that at this moment your lady has only just now laid aside the manuscript of her new romance, on which she labors night and day; and that she is employed in writing some verses, which, at to-morrow's *levee*, she intends reading to the Marquise de Maintenon. In short, I am certain that she is still awake, and I implore of you, Martiniere, have compassion, and open the door, for, mark you! on this interview depends the rescue of an unfortunate man from utter destruction. His honor, liberty, and life are at stake, and must be forever lost, if he cannot speak with your mistress directly. Reflect, too, that the noble lady would never forgive you if she learned that by your obstinacy an unhappy being was sent from her door, who in his distress came to beg assistance."

"But for what reason," said Martiniere, "would you appeal to my lady's compassion at this dead hour of the night? Come back to-morrow at a proper time, and we shall then see what may be done." "How?" said the stranger; "will misfortune, then, which strikes us, poor mortals, with the unexpected rapidity of lightning, be regulated by hours and minutes? Even, if in one moment the possibility of rescue may be lost, should, then, assistance be delayed because it happens to be mid-night, instead of mid-day? Open the door, and fear nothing from *un pauvre miserable*, who now, forsaken by the world, and overwhelmed by his cruel destiny, would implore your lady's protection from the dangers that threaten him?" Martiniere perceived that the man's voice faltered at these words,—that he even moaned and sobbed; moreover, his tones were those of a mere youth. Her heart became at last so far softened, that without further reflection she ran for the keys.

No sooner had she opened the door, than the strange figure,

disguised in a long mantle, rushed in, and stepping past Martiniere, called out with a loud voice in the corridor, "Bring me directly into your lady's presence!" Martiniere, much alarmed, held up the candle, to try if she could recognize his features, and the light fell upon the deadly pale and agitated countenance of a very young man; but she had almost fallen to the ground in her terror, when he suddenly threw aside his mantle, and the glittering hilt of a stiletto was visible in his bosom. The youth's eyes seemed to flash fire on the poor waiting-maid, and in a voice wilder than ever he repeated, "Lead me, I say, to your mistress!" Martiniere was now fully persuaded that her lady was in the most imminent danger, and her attachment to the noble demoiselle, whom she looked up to with even filial respect and veneration, was such, that it got the better of her own fears, and gave her a degree of firmness of which she would otherwise have been quite incapable. Suddenly she closed the door of her apartment, took her station before it, and, in a strong steady voice, "In truth," said she, "your mad behavior here suits ill with your humble complaints and entreaties, by which I so rashly allowed myself to be persuaded. As to my lady, you shall certainly not speak with her in this mood, nor have you any right to make such a demand; for if your intentions are really blameless, there is no need that you should be afraid of the daylight. Therefore come to-morrow, and you shall be listened to; but for the present, not a word more; but get out of the house. Pack up, and begone!"

The strange youth heaved a long deep sigh, fixed a frightful look on Martiniere, and grasped the hilt of his stiletto.—The *femme de chambre* thought her last hour was come; and silently recommended herself to Heaven. However, she stood firm, and boldly looked the young man in the face, drawing herself up more closely against the door of the apartment, through which it was necessary to pass in order to arrive at that of de Scuderi. "Let me go to your lady, I tell you once more!" said the stranger, "or you may have reason bitterly to repent your conduct when it is too late."

“Do what you will,” said Martiniere, “I shall not stir from this place. Fulfil the wicked intentions for which you came; though, remember, you and your accomplices will one day die for them a shameful death on the scaffold.”—

“Ha, truly,” cried the young man in a frightful tone, “you are in the right, Martiniere!—the fate that awaits me is, indeed, dark and disgraceful; but, as to my accomplice, *he* remains yet safe, and unsuspected.” With these words, casting terrific glances on the poor girl, he drew out the stiletto.

“Heaven have mercy!” cried she, expecting that it was to be plunged into her heart; but, at that moment, the clang of arms was heard in the street, and the trampling of horses.

“The *Marechaussee* — *Marechaussee*! — Help — help!” — screamed la Martiniere.

“Cruel woman,” said the stranger, “thou art resolved on my utter destruction. Now, all is over, and the opportunity lost. But, take this, and give it to your lady to-night, if possible, or to-morrow morning, if you will; for to me, indeed, the time is now indifferent.” In speaking these words, rather in a low voice, the man had taken the candlestick from la Martiniere, extinguished the light, and forced a small casket into her hands.

“On your hopes of salvation,” said he, “I conjure you, Martiniere, that you will deliver this box to your lady.” Then he abruptly threw away the candlestick, turned round, and sprang out at the door.

Martiniere, meanwhile, was so terrified, not knowing what he intended to do, that she had fallen, half fainting, on the floor. With difficulty she raised herself, and, in the dark, groped her way back to the room, where, quite confused and exhausted, she sank into her arm-chair. From this stupor she was suddenly awoke, by the harsh creaking noise made by turning the key, which, in her fright, she had left in the lock of the house door. Afterwards she heard it firmly closed, and cautious steps, as of some one groping the way to her chamber. Her consternation was now greater than ever; and she sat motionless, expecting some horrible event, till the door opened, and by the glimmer of her night-lamp, she rec-

ognized the honest Baptiste, who looked deadly pale, and was in great agitation.

“For the love of all the saints,” he began, “tell me, Mam’selle Martiniere, what has happened?—Oh, the terror that I have suffered!—I know not rightly what could be the reason, but my own apprehension absolutely drove me away from the wedding to-night; so I set out earlier than any one else, on the road homeward, and at length arrived in our street. Now, thinks I to myself, Martiniere is very easily awoke; she will hear me for certain, and let me in if I knock softly and cautiously at the house door. But, ere I had come so far, behold there appears against me the whole posse of the watch, cavalry forsooth, and infantry, armed up to the teeth. They directly take me prisoner, and, notwithstanding all my expostulations, will not let me go; but luckily, Des-grais is among them, who knows me very well. As they were holding their lanterns up to my nose, he says, ‘How, now, Baptiste, whither are you wandering now in the dark? You should rather stay at home, like a careful man, and keep watch over the house. In truth, it is by no means convenient for you, or any one else to be on the streets to-night. We are resolved to let no individual pass whom we do not know, and think ourselves sure of one prisoner at least, before day-break.’ You can easily imagine, Martiniere, how much I was alarmed by these words, as I was thus assured that some new and atrocious crimes must have been discovered. But now, as I was going to tell you, I had come almost to the threshold of our own house, and, there a man, disguised in a long grey mantle, rushes out with a drawn dagger in his hand; I could mark him well, for he passed and repassed me. On my entrance, I find the house door left open, the key still in the lock;—tell me, what is the meaning of all this?”

Martiniere being now somewhat tranquillized, described to him all that had happened. She and Baptiste went together to reconnoitre in the corridor, where they only found the candlestick on the floor, as it had been thrown down by the

strange man, when he made his escape. "From your account," said Baptiste, "it is but too certain that my lady was to have been robbed, and probably murdered. The man, as you tell me, knew that you were with her quite unprotected,—nay, that she was awake, and employed on her writings. No doubt, he was one of these accursed miscreants who force themselves into the interior of houses, and make themselves acquainted with every circumstance which may be serviceable for the execution of their devilish plans. And, as for the little casket, Mam'selle, we should, in my opinion, throw it into the deepest pool of the Seine. For, who can tell whether some wicked monster has not designs against the life of our lady, and that, when she opens the box, she may not drop down dead, like the old Marquis de Tournay, when he broke open the seal of a letter which he had received from an unknown hand?"

After long consultation, the two faithful domestics at last resolved that they would describe to their lady all that had occurred; and also deliver into her hands the mysterious box, which certainly might be opened, though not without regular precautions. After maturely reflecting on every circumstance attending the stranger's appearance, they agreed that the matter was of far too much consequence for them to decide upon, and that they must leave the unravelling of this mystery to the wise and learned demoiselle.

Before proceeding any farther with our story, we must here observe, that Martiniere's dread of assassination, and Baptiste's apprehension of poison being concealed in the casket, were by no means without foundation. Exactly at this period, Paris was the scene of the most horrible atrocities, and perhaps the most diabolical inventions that ever entered a human brain, supplied unprincipled people with the means of gratifying their passions. One Glaser, or Glazier, a German apothecary, who was the best operative chemist of his time, had long busied himself (as usual with people of his

profession,) in endeavors to find out the transmutation of metals, and the *elixir vitæ*. He had taken into partnership an Italian, named Exili, who, for some time, also bore a good character, but to him, at last, the art of making gold only served as a pretext for following out the most abominable of all designs. While Glazier thought merely of discovering the philosopher's stone, the Italian was secretly employed in the constant mixing, distilling, and subliming of poisons, which at last he brought to such perfection, that he could produce death in many different ways, and either without any trace of such operation left in the body, or with symptoms so new and unheard of, that the physicians were completely deceived; and, not suspecting this kind of assassination, ascribed the patient's death to some inscrutable decree of Providence.

Cautiously as Exili went to work, he was at last suspected as a vender of poison, and was thrown into the Bastile.—Soon afterwards, he had an opportunity of becoming acquainted during his confinement with a certain Captain de St. Croix, a man of infamous character, who had long lived with the Marchioness de Brinvilliers, under circumstances which brought disgrace on all her connections, till at last, as the Marquis seemed to care nothing about his wife's conduct, her father Dreux d'Aubray was necessitated to separate the criminals by an arrestment, which he carried into execution against St. Croix.

Wholly unprincipled as this man was, and (though counterfeiting piety!) inclined from his earliest youth to every species of vice; jealous—revengeful, even to madness, he could not have met with any discovery more welcome and congenial to his disposition, than the diabolical contrivances of Exili, which seemed to give him the power of annihilating all his enemies. He became, therefore, a zealous scholar of the Italian, and was soon equally skilful with his master, whose imprisonment continued, but St. Croix being soon after liberated, was in a condition to carry on this infernal trade.

Of course he betook himself again, though cautiously and in secret, to his former mistress, and de Brinvilliers, who was only a depraved woman, became, with the help of St. Croix, an absolute monster. Gradually she was led on to poison her own father with whom she lived, hypocritically pretending to nurse him in his old age, and in like manner, her brothers and sisters were sacrificed. Against her father, she was instigated only by revenge, because he had interposed his authority to deprive her of her paramour ; but as to the rest, she had other motives, for by their deaths she succeeded to a very rich inheritance.

From various examples of such assassins, we may prove the horrible truth, that the inclination towards crimes of this description becomes at last an absolute ruling passion, without any other object but the unnatural pleasure they derive from it, (as the alchemist makes experiments for his own diversion.) Such dealers in poison have often destroyed individuals, whose life or death must have been to them, in other respects, perfectly indifferent. The sudden and almost simultaneous death of many poor prisoners at the Hotel Dieu, afterwards raised the suspicion that the bread was poisoned which de Brinvilliers used to share out among them, in order to acquire a reputation as a model of piety and benevolence.

However this might be, it is historically certain, that she many times poisoned the dishes at her own table, especially Perigord pies, and placed them before the distinguished guests that were invited to her house, so that the Chevalier de Guet, and several other persons of eminence, fell victims to those demoniacal banquets. Notwithstanding all these practices, however, St. Croix, de Brinvilliers, and a female assistant named la Chaussee, were able for a long time to keep their crimes under an impenetrable veil. There was, at all events, no sufficient proof against them, nor could their physicians always decide that their victims had died by poison ; but whatever may be the cunning and hypocrisy of such wretches, Divine justice never fails, sooner or later, to overtake the guilty.

The poisons which St. Croix compounded were of a nature so fine and subtle, that if the greatest caution were not observed in preparing the powder, (since named by the Parisians *poudre de succession*,) a single chance inhalation might cause the instant death of the artist. St. Croix, therefore, when engaged in his operations, wore a mask, principally made of glass, and with the nostrils covered with silk ; but this happened to fall off one day, when he was in the act of shaking a powder, just prepared, into a phial, and in an instant, (being already almost suffocated for want of breath,) having inhaled some of the fine dust which flew about him, he fell down and almost immediately expired.

As he had died without heirs, the officers of the law hastened to his apartments to take charge of his effects. There they found, shut up in a box, the whole arsenal of poisons, by means of which St. Croix had carried on his work of destruction ; and besides this, there were found many letters of de Brinvilliers, which left no doubts as to her guilt. She fled accordingly to a convent at Liege ; but Desgrais, the principal officer of police, was sent after her. Disguised as a monk, he appeared in the convent, where she had taken refuge, and (his features luckily being unknown to her,) he succeeded in drawing this abominable woman into an intrigue, and persuaded her to make an assignation with him in a retired garden beyond the town walls. Immediately on her arrival there, she was surrounded by the catch-poles of Desgrais ; the amorous monk transformed himself into a police officer, and forced her into a carriage that stood ready near the garden, when, with a guard of cavalry, they drove off directly for Paris. La Chaussee had by this time been brought to the block ; de Brinvilliers soon suffered the same death, after which her body was burned, and her ashes strewn to the wind.

The Parisians felt themselves greatly relieved, when these monsters were taken from the world, who could, unpunished and unsuspected, direct their machinations against friend and foe ; but soon afterwards it was proved, that though the town

might be rid of St. Croix and his accomplices, yet their art had not disappeared along with them. Like an invisible demon, the same horrid guilt of assassination continued to make its way even into the bosom of families, breaking through the most confidential circles that love and friendship could frame. He who had been to-day in the utmost bloom of health, might be found to-morrow tottering about in the most wretched state of decline; and no skill of the physician could rescue such victims from a certain death. Riches, a comfortable place in the legislature, a young and handsome wife—any such advantages were sufficient to direct against their possessors the relentless malice of these invisible assassins. Cruel distrust and suspicion dissolved the most sacred ties among relations. Husband and wife, father and son, sister and brother, were alienated by the terror which they felt one of another. At the social banquet, food and wine often remained untouched, while, instead of indulging in innocent mirth, the party, with pale and confused looks, were trying to find out the concealed murderer. At length fathers of families might be seen timidly purchasing provisions in remote districts, and dressing the food thus obtained, in some neighboring *boutique*, fearing the treachery that might lurk under their own roofs. Yet in many instances all these precautions were used in vain.

The king, in order as much as possible to stem this torrent of iniquity, established a peculiar court of justice, to which he gave exclusively the commission to search into, and punish these crimes. This was the institution named the *Chambre Ardente*, which held its sittings under the Bastille, and of which la Regnie was the president. For a considerable time, this man's endeavors, zealously as they were carried on, proved in vain; it was reserved for the cunning Desgrais to trace out the guilty, even in the most obscure hiding places. In the Faubourg de St. Germain, there lived an old woman named la Voisin, who employed herself in conjuration and fortune-telling, and who, with the help of two confederates, le Sage and la Vigoureux, had been able to excite the fear and as-

tonishment, even of persons who were not generally to be considered weak or credulous. But she did more than this,—having had an opportunity, like St. Croix, of obtaining lessons from Exili, she also prepared, in like manner, that fine undiscoverable poison, by means of which she assisted reckless, mercenary sons to arrive, before the due time, at their inheritance, and depraved wives to get younger husbands. Desgrais, however, found means to pluck the veil from all her mysteries, and consequently she was brought to trial, and made a full confession. The *Chambre Ardente* sentenced her to be burned at the *Place de Greve*, where she was executed accordingly.

There was found among her papers a list of all the persons who had availed themselves of her art, so that one execution was rapidly followed by another; and very serious suspicions were entertained even against people of the highest rank.—Among other examples, it was alleged that Cardinal Bronzy had obtained from her means of bringing to an untimely end all the persons to whom, as Bishop of Narbonne, he was under the necessity of paying yearly pensions. In like manner, the Duchess de Bouillon, and the Countess de Soissons, whose names were on the list, were accused with having dealt with the infernal sorceress; and even Francis Henri de Montmorenci, Duke of Luxemburg, marshal and peer of the realm, was not spared. He gave himself to imprisonment in the Bastile, where, through the hatred of Louvois and la Regnie, he was confined to a cell only six feet square, and months past away before the means were found to prove that the Duke's misdemeanor had not been such as to deserve punishment. He had only been foolish enough, on one occasion, to have his horoscope drawn and calculated by le Sage. There can be no doubt that it was principally the blindness of overzeal, by which the president la Regnie was led to such acts of cruelty and vengeance: however, his tribunal now assumed altogether the character of a Catholic inquisition, and the slightest suspicions were sufficient grounds for prosecution

and imprisonment, while it was often left to mere chance to prove the innocence of persons accused of capital crimes.— Besides, la Regnie was both hideous in appearance, and naturally spiteful in temper, so that he soon drew on himself the hatred of that public whose tranquillity he had been chosen to protect. The Duchess de Bouillon being interrogated by him, whether, at her meeting with the sorceress, she had seen the devil ; she answered, “ no ; but methinks I see him *now*.”

CHAPTER II.

DURING that frightful period when the blood of the suspected and guilty flowed in torrents upon the scaffold, so that at length the secret murders by poison had become more rare of occurrence, a new disturbance arose, which more than ever filled the city with terror and astonishment. Some mysterious band of miscreants seemed in league together, for the purpose of bringing into their own possession all the finest jewelry in Paris. No sooner had a rich ornament been purchased, than, however carefully it had been locked up, it vanished immediately, in a manner the most inconceivable. It was far more intolerable, however, that every one who ventured out at night with jewels on his person, was attacked on the streets, (or in dark courts and alleys,) and robbed of his property, while, though some escaped with life, scarcely a week passed away, in which several murders were not committed. Those who were fortunate enough to survive such an attack, deponed that they had been knocked down by a blow on the head, as resistlessly as if it had been a thunderbolt, and that on awakening from their stupefaction, they had found themselves robbed, and lying in a situation quite different from that where they had first received the blow. On the other hand, the person who had been murdered, and some of whom were found almost every second morning upon the streets, or in the dark entrances to houses, had all one and the same

deadly wound ; namely, a stab in the heart, which, according to the opinion of the surgeons, must kill so instantaneously, that the victim so struck would, without a scream or groan, fall instantly lifeless to the ground.

Now, at the luxurious and gay court of Louis XIV. what young nobleman was there to be found, who had not some amorous intrigue, and who did not glide through the dark streets at a late hour, bearing oftentimes rich jewels as a present to his mistress ?—As if the murderers had been aided by some direct intercourse with the devil, they knew exactly where and when any opportunity of this kind was to occur. Frequently the unfortunate man was not allowed to reach the scene of his love adventures ; at other times he was struck dead on the threshold of the house, or at the chamber door of his mistress, who with horror discovered on the following morning the ghastly corpse.

In vain did Argenson, the police minister, order every individual to be arrested who seemed in any degree suspicious ; in vain did the passionate la Regnie foam with rage, and endeavor by torture to force out confession ; in vain, too, were the watchmen doubled in number ; no trace of the criminals could be discovered. Only the precaution of going fully armed, and employing torch-bearers, seemed to have some effect, and yet there were instances, when the attendants, if not sufficiently numerous, were brought into confusion by large stones being thrown at them ; while, at the same time, their master, as it usually happened, was robbed and murdered. It was especially wondered at, that, notwithstanding the minutest inquiries in every place where the traffic in jewels could be practicable, no evidence was to be found that any of the stolen goods had been offered for sale ; in short, all the ordinary means of justice to bring about discovery were completely baffled.

Desgrais, the principal police officer, was furiously enraged that the miscreants should have been able to escape from his cunning and contrivance. Indeed, that quarter of the town,

(commonly thought the most unquiet,) in which he was stationed, was, for the most part, spared; while, in other districts where no one apprehended any outrage, the robbers and assassins failed not almost every night to find out new victims. Under these circumstances, Desgrais bethought himself of a good *ruse de guerre*, viz. : to multiply his own personal identity; in plainer words, to dress up different individuals, so exactly like himself, and who resembled him so much in gait, voice, figure, and features, that even the catch-poles and patrol did not know which was the true Desgrais. Meanwhile, he used to watch quite alone, at the risk of his life, in the most retired lanes and courts, from which he would at times emerge, and cautiously follow any individual who seemed, by his appearance, likely to bear about his person property of value. The person so followed remained always unmolested, so that, of this contrivance, too, the assassins must have been fully instructed, and Desgrais fell into absolute despair.

At length he came one morning to the President la Regnie, pale, disordered, and, indeed, quite beside himself. "What's the matter now?" said the President, "what news? Have you found any trace?" "Ha! your Excellence," stammering in his agitation,—“your Excellence,—last night, not far from the Louvre, the Marquis de la Fare was attacked in my presence.” “Heaven and earth!” shouted la Regnie, “then we have them at last!”—“Oh, hear only,” said Desgrais, with a bitter smile; “hear only, in the first place, how it happened. I was standing at the Louvre, and with feelings that could scarcely be envied, even by the damned, waiting for those demons that have so long mocked at our endeavors. Then, with steps rather unsteady, and always turning his head, as if to watch some one behind, there comes up a passenger, who went by without observing me. By the moonlight I recognized that this was the Marquis de la Fare; I could keep watch over him from the place where I stood, and I knew very well whence and whither he was going. Scarcely

had he proceeded ten or twelve paces farther, when a man started up, as if he had risen out of the earth, attacked the Marquis, and knocked him down. Without reflection, and overcome by the impulse of the moment, which promised to give the murderer at once into my hands, I shouted aloud, and thought that with one vehement bound I could dart from my hiding-place, and seize upon him. But, as ill luck would have it, there I entangle myself in the skirts of my mantle, and fall down. I see the man hastening away swift as the wind. I scramble up, run after him, and, in running, blow my trumpet. In an instant I am answered by the whistles of the patrol ;—all is in commotion ;—from all quarters is heard the clang of arms, or trampling of horses. “ Here—here ! ” cried I in my loudest tone, “ Desgrais ! Desgrais ! ” till the streets re-echoed to my voice. Still, by the clear moonlight, I could see the man moving before me, and keep a strict watch on all the turnings that he makes to elude me. We come at last into the Rue de la Nicaise, where his strength in running appeared completely to fail him. I, of course, exert myself with double energy. At that time he had got before me only, at the utmost, fifteen paces——”

“ You overtake him—you sieze him—the patrol comes up ? ” roared la Regnie, with glaring eyes, and catching Desgrais by the arm, as if he had been the flying murderer. “ Fifteen steps,” repeated Desgrais in a hollow voice, and so much agitated that he could scarcely breathe ; “ fifteen steps or thereabouts, distant before me, the man starts away out of the moonlight into the dark shade, and vanishes through the wall—— ! ”

“ Are you mad ? ” said la Regnie, indignant and disappointed. “ From this hour onwards,” said Desgrais, rubbing his brows, “ your excellency may call me a madman,—an insane visionary, if you will ; but the truth is neither more nor less than I have narrated. I stood staring at the wall, almost petrified with astonishment, when several of the patrol came up, and with them the Marquis de la Fare, who had recovered

his senses, and now appeared sword in hand. We had our torches lighted, and examined the place with the greatest care; but there was no trace to be found of a door or window, or, in short, of any opening whatever. It is a strong stone wall of a court, adjoining to a house in which people are living, to whom not the slightest suspicion is attached. Even this very day, by sunlight, I have examined the whole premises with the most scrupulous care, and, doubtless, it must be the very devil himself who mocks at us in this manner."

Desgrais's narrative was soon made known all over Paris. People's heads were full of the sorceries, incantations, compacts with the devil, &c., attributed to la Voisin, la Vigoreux, and other renowned disciples of le Sage, and the mob are always ready to carry to an extreme their belief in the marvellous,—that which Desgrais had said in a fit of passion was now circulated through the town as the mere truth. Every one alleged that the devil himself was protecting in this world those wicked mortals who had sold him their souls, and as might be expected, Desgrais's story received many embellishments. A kind of popular romance was rapidly got up on this foundation, with a frontispiece representing the police-officer staring at a hideous figure of the devil, who was in the act of sinking before his astonished eyes into the earth. This book alone was enough to terrify the people, and even to take all courage from the watchmen, who now in the night season wandered through the streets terrified and desponding, hung with amulets and drenched with holy water.

Argenson soon perceived that the *Chambre Ardente* would completely lose its character, and applied to the king, recommending the establishment of a new court of justice, destined exclusively for the discovery and punishment of these midnight assassinations. But the king, conscious that he had already given too much power to the *Chambre Ardente*, and in horror at the numberless executions which were forced on by the blood-thirsty la Regnie, entirely rejected this proposal. It was requisite, therefore, to form some other plan, by which

Louis might be led into this arrangement. Accordingly, at the apartments of the Marquis de Maintenon, where he used to spend his afternoons, and even to hold councils with his ministers till late in the night, a poem was one day handed to him, purporting to be the joint production of certain perplexed lovers, and complaining that where gallantry dictated they should carry a rich present to some favorite lady, they must now-a-days always risk their lives in the undertaking. It was, no doubt, as they alleged, a delight as well as a duty to encounter all dangers for the sake of a beloved and beautiful mistress, at a knightly tournament—but it was quite a different affair as to the malicious and cowardly attack of an assassin, against whom one could not always be armed, nor have any fair chance. But king Louis, forsooth, was the gleaming pole-star of gallantry and knighthood,—whose rays were to break through the nocturnal darkness, and bring to light these mysterious crimes which had been so long concealed. Moreover, this idolized hero, who had crushed his enemies to the earth, would now, too, brandish his victorious sword, and like Hercules with the Lernæan serpent, or Theseus with the Minotaur, would oppose the horrid demon of assassination which destroyed all the raptures of mutual love, and changed all innocent delights into sorrow and hopeless lamentation.

Such, for the most part, was the overstrained and absurd style of the poem, which, however, was just as praiseworthy as French heroics generally are. Serious as the matter might seem, there was yet no want of humorous delineation, how the lovers, gliding cautiously and in secret to the habitations of their mistresses, were unavoidably subjected to the influence of fear and apprehension, and how they came pale and trembling into *her* presence, before whom they should only have appeared bold and buoyant in spirit. There was here, also, a good spicing of *double entendre*, and when, over and above these merits, the whole was rounded off with a high-flown panegyric on King Louis, nothing less could be expected, but that he would, at all events, read it through with satisfaction.

This happened accordingly ; he even read it over aloud to the Marchioness de Maintenon, and then, with a good humored smile, asked her what she thought of this petition ?

De Maintenon, who always kept up a becoming gravity of demeanor, and who was not without pretensions (however ill founded) to piety and devotion, replied, that the robbers and assassins, no doubt, should, if possible, be discovered and brought to punishment, but as for those idle libertines, who, of their own accord, exposed themselves to danger,—walking by stealth, and in the dark, they did not, in her opinion, deserve any particular protection. The king, not satisfied with this vague answer, folded up the paper, and was on the point of returning to the secretary of State, who was at work in the adjoining room, when his eye lighted by chance on our heroine, de Scuderi, who had taken her place not far from the Marchioness. To the former he now betook himself, and the smile, which had vanished on his features, was again renewed. “The Marchioness,” said he, “is determined not to countenance the goings-on of our young gallants, and will not meet me on ground which she considers forbidden. ‘But I appeal to you, Mademoiselle, as a poetess, what is your opinion of this rhyming supplication?’” A fleeting blush, like the twilight of an evening sky, coursed over the pale cheeks of the venerable lady. She rose respectfully from her chair, dropped a low courtesy, and, with downcast eyes replied,

“Un amant qui craint des voleurs,
N'est point digne d'amour.”*

The chivalrous spirit of these few words was admirably suited to the disposition of Louis XIV. and instantly effaced from his mind all the prolix *tirades* of the poem. His eyes sparkled, and he exclaimed, with great vivacity, “By St. Denis, Mademoiselle, you are in the right ! No blind ordinance of Justice, that strikes the innocent along with the guilty, shall afford protection to cowardice. Let Argenson and la Regnie play their own parts as well as they can, but we shall not give ourselves any farther trouble !”

* A lover, who fears thieves, is not worthy of love.

CHAPTER III.

Now to return, (after this long digression,) to our story ; all the horrors of this eventful period weighed on Martiniere's mind, when, on the following morning, she related to her mistress what had happened in the night, and, with fear and trembling, delivered up the mysterious casket. On this occasion both she and Baptiste, who stood pale as death, twirling and plaiting his cap in a corner, became almost speechless with anxiety. However, they begged of their Lady by no means to open the box without the utmost possible foresight and precaution. "You are both very childish," said she, calmly weighing it in her hand ; "that I am not rich,—that I have no concealed treasure in my possession, that would be worth the trouble of a murder, is known doubtless to these street assassins, just as well as to you or me.—You think that attempts are made against my life ; but to whom could the death of an old woman of seventy-three be of importance, especially one who never expressed enmity or resentment against any mortal, except the robbers and peace-breakers in her own romances ? One, moreover, who cannot excite envy, having no other merit of distinction, than that of composing very middling verses,—and who has no estate to leave behind her except the *parure* of an antiquated demoiselle, who was obliged to appear at court, and a few dozen books in gilt binding. In short, Martiniere, you may describe this man in the most frightful colors that you can invent, but, for my part, I cannot believe that he had any evil intentions. So then," — With these words she prepared to open the box. Martiniere, who had little doubt that the contents were poisoned, started back, and Baptiste, with a groan, almost fell on his knees, when he saw his Lady press on a steel button that served in place of a lock, and the lid flew open with a rattling noise. How was de Scuderi astonished, when she saw glittering, on a red velvet lining, a magnificent necklace

made of the rarest jewels, finely set in gold, and a pair of bracelets of the same description!

She took out the necklace, admiring its fine workmanship, while Martiniere, having gained courage, was ogling the rich bracelets, and insisting that the proud Duchess de Montespan herself did not possess such ornaments. "But what means this?" said de Scuderi, perceiving a small nicely-folded billet among the jewels. "What has this letter to say?" She justly expected to find here some explanation of the mystery; but no sooner had she perused the billet, than she let it drop, clasped her hands in consternation, and then, almost fainting, sank back into her chair. "Oh, this insult!" cried she; "must the reproach be reserved for me in my old age, of having behaved with thoughtless levity, like a young silly girl? Good Heaven! Are words thrown out in jest capable of such frightful interpretation? And am I, who, from childhood, up to the present hour, have been constant in all the exercises of devotion, to be looked upon as almost an accomplice in this devilish conspiracy?"

De Scuderi now held her handkerchief to her eyes, and even sobbed so violently, that Martiniere and Baptiste, in their anxiety and terror, were quite confounded, and knew not what to do. The waiting-maid at length took up the fatal billet, at the commencement of which was written these words:

*"Un amant qui craint des voleurs,
N'est point digne d'amour."*

The rest was as follows. "Have the goodness, Mademoiselle, to accept, from some unknown friends, the accompanying jewels. Of late, we had fallen into great danger from an intolerable persecution, though our only crime is, that, exercising the natural rights of the strong over the weak, we appropriate to ourselves treasures that would otherwise be unworthily squandered;—but, by your wit and talents, we have been rescued from the fate that awaited us. As a proof of our respect and gratitude, we have sent you this necklace, and the accompanying ornaments, which, however unworthy

of you, are the most valuable that we have for a long time been able to meet with. We trust that you will not withdraw from us your friendship and kind remembrance.

(Signed)

THE INVISIBLES."

"Is it possible," said de Scuderi, when she had in some degree recovered, that any human beings can keep up such a system of shameless wickedness and depravity?" The sun was now shining bright through the window curtains, which were of red silk, and the brilliants which lay on the table gleamed and sparkled in the deep-colored light. De Scuderi happening to look at them, turned away with abhorrence, and ordered Martiniere to remove those frightful objects, which seemed to her imagination stained with the blood of some murdered victim. The waiting-maid having put the jewels into the box, was of opinion, that it would be best to deliver them up to the minister of police, and confide to him the whole story of the young man's nocturnal visit, and his having left the casket in her house. De Scuderi rose and walked slowly to and fro through the chamber, reflecting for the first time what was best to be done. At length she ordered Baptiste to call a sedan chair, and Martiniere to dress her as soon as possible, as she would go directly to the Marquis de Maintenon. Accordingly, she was carried to the house of that lady, exactly at the hour when the latter, as de Scuderi expected, was alone in her apartments, and, of course, she took with her the casket containing the mysterious jewels.

Doubtless the Marchioness must have been much astonished when she saw the lady de Scuderi (who, at other times, notwithstanding her advanced age, had been the very *beau ideal* of grace and dignity,) now enter the room, pale, confused, awkward, and tottering. "What, for the love of all the saints, has happened to you?" said she, while the poor demoiselle, quite beside herself, and ready to faint, only tried, as soon as possible, to reach an arm-chair, which the Marchioness offered to her. At last, when she was again able to speak, de Scuderi described, with great eloquence, the gross and indelible

insult and disgrace which had been brought on her, in consequence of the thoughtless *badinage* with which, in the king's presence, she had answered the supplication of the perplexed lovers. The Marchioness, when she had heard the whole story, was of opinion that de Scuderi took this occurrence too deeply to heart, and that the insolence and depravity of wretches like these, ought never to disturb the tranquillity of a noble and elevated mind. The jewels were then produced, and as soon as the Marchioness beheld them, she could not help uttering an exclamation of delight and approval. She took out the necklace and carried it to the window, where she alternately held the brilliants at a distance to mark how they glittered in the sun, and drew them nearer, in order to examine the fine workmanship of the gold, admiring with what exquisite art every link of the chain was elaborated. Having ended her scrutiny, the Marchioness turned to de Scuderi, and said, "Do you know, mademoiselle, that no one could have made this necklace or the bracelets but the celebrated Rene Cardillac?"

At that time Rene Cardillac was, without one exception, the best goldsmith in Paris, and besides, celebrated as one of the most ingenious and singular men of the age. Rather of low stature, but, broad-shouldered, and of Herculean strength, Cardillac, though now more than fifty years of age, had still the full strength and activity of youth. This uncommon energy was still farther betokened by his thickly-curled reddish hair, and the resolute expression of his compressed glistening visage, while, if he had not been known through all Paris as one of the most honorable and correct of citizens, disinterested, candid, and ready to help those who are in distress, the strange aspect of his deep-sunk, small and twinkling eyes might have brought on him the imputation of concealed malice and cunning.

Cardillac was not only, as above mentioned, the greatest master of his art in all Paris, but, generally speaking, of the era in which he lived. Intimately acquainted with the

nature of precious stones, he knew how to treat them, and set them off to such advantage, that an ornament which had before been looked upon as tarnished and useless, came out of his workshop in dazzling lustre, and better than it had been for many years before. Almost every commission that fell in his way he undertook with the utmost ardor, and was contented with a price, which seemed to bear no proportion to the excellence of his workmanship, and the time that it had cost. Night and day he was heard hammering in his workshop, and often when a ring or necklace was neatly completed, he became suddenly discontented with the pattern, or doubtful as to the finishing of some minute ornament—which was with him quite a sufficient reason for throwing the whole into the crucible, and beginning *de novo*.

Thus every one of his performances became a masterpiece of art, by which the person who gave the commission was astonished ; but it became at last almost impossible to get any work out of his hands. Under a thousand pretexts, he used to put off his customers from week to week, and from month to month. In vain did people offer him double payment ; he would not take a single louis d'or beyond the price for which he had bargained. If at last obliged to yield to the urgency of his employer, and give up the jewels, this he could not do without betraying all symptoms of vexation, and even ungovernable rage. Especially, for example, if he were called on to render up some article of consequence which, on account of the gold and diamonds, might be worth a thousand louis d'ors, he was known frequently to run and stamp about the streets, like a madman, cursing aloud, and denouncing himself, his trade, and all the world. At such times, however, if it happened that a new customer plucked him by the sleeve, and said, Rene Cardillac, will you not make up a beautiful necklace for my bride, bracelets for my mistress, or so forth, then he would turn briskly round, his small eyes twinkled, and he would ask, " What have you got then ? " The customer would perhaps pull out a little casket, and say, " Here

are jewels ; they are not worth much, perhaps—mere common trumpery—but in your hands, Mons. l'Artiste ”—— Cardillac, without letting him finish his speech, snatches the box, takes out the jewels, which in reality perhaps are of little or no value, holds them to the light, and exclaims with rapture, “ Ho ! ho ! common trumpery do you say ? By no means ; fine rubies—good emeralds ; only let me have them, and if you do not mind a handful of louis d'ors, I shall add a few brilliants to the rest, that will gleam like the very sun in heaven ! ” The other of course answers, “ Master Rene, I leave all to your own discretion, and will pay whatever you are pleased to demand.” Without making any distinction whether his customer be only a rich citizen, or a man of high rank, Cardillac then embraces him with the utmost ardor, exclaiming that he is again quite happy, and that the work will be finished in eight days.

After this, he runs headlong, as if possessed, towards his own house, goes into his private study and sets to work, hammering away, and, according to his promise, there is a masterpiece of art completed in eight days. Yet, whenever the bridegroom or lover, by whom that order had been given, comes rejoicing, to pay the small sum that had been agreed on, and take home the jewels, Cardillac becomes all at once rude, obstinate, and is hardly on any terms to be spoken with. “ But, good master Rene,” says the customer, “ to-morrow is my wedding-day, and——” “ What the devil do I care for your wedding-day ? ” says Cardillac,—“ Call again in a fortnight hence.” “ But the necklace is finished ; here is the price agreed on, and I must have it ! ” “ And, I tell you,” says the goldsmith, “ that I must yet alter many things in this necklace, and that I shall by no means give it to you to-day.” “ And I tell you,” thunders the other, that, if you will not readily, and in good humor, give up the necklace, which is now ready, and for which I am willing even to pay you double, I shall in half an hour, bring Desgrais with a troop of *gens d'armes*, to force them out of your hands ! ” “ Well, may the devil himself,

and all his imps torment you with a thousand pairs of red-hot pincers, and hang three hundred weight on your necklace, so that your bride may be strangled!" With these, or such like words, Cardillac crams the ornament into the breast pocket of his customer, seizes him by the arms, and turns him out of doors with such violence, that he falls headlong down the staircase. The goldsmith then runs to the window, and laughs like a demon, when he sees how the poor devil of a lover limps, with a bloody nose, and quite confounded, away from the house.

Such conduct, indeed, durst not be repeated often; but adventures had several times occurred precisely such as we have here described. It was, moreover, quite extraordinary and inexplicable, how Cardillac, after he had undertaken a work with enthusiasm, would, all of a sudden, change his mind, and in the greatest agitation, and with moving entreaties, even sobs and tears, conjure his employer for the love of the blessed Virgin, and all the saints, that he might be released from the fulfilment of his task.

Notwithstanding the readiness with which he generally took orders, there were several persons of the highest respectability, both at Court and in the city, who had in vain offered Cardillac large sums, in order to procure from him the smallest piece of workmanship. As to the King, the goldsmith threw himself at his Majesty's feet, and implored the favor that he might be excused from working for him. In like manner, he refused every commission from the Marchioness de Maintenon; nay, with an expression of aversion and horror, rejected an order that she gave him, to make up a small ring, with emblematic ornaments, which she wished to have given as a present to Racine.

"I would lay any bet," said the Marchioness to de Scuderi, "that if I should send for Cardillac, to learn for whom he made these ornaments, he would refuse to come, fearing that I want to give him a commission, for he is firmly determined never to make anything for me;—and yet it has been

alleged, that his obstinacy has rather decreased of late—it is said he labors more industriously than ever, and delivers his work immediately, though not without making hideous faces, and showing as much irritability as before.” De Scuderi, who was extremely anxious that the ornament should come into the hands of the proper owner, thought it would only be requisite to inform the strange professor of rings and bracelets, that no task was required of him, farther than his valuation of certain jewels. To this the Marchioness agreed ; Cardillac was sent for, and, as if he had been already on the way, but a short time elapsed when he made his appearance.

As soon as he perceived de Scuderi, he seemed like one struck and confounded by some sudden impression ; and forgetting for the moment the rules of good breeding, he made, in the first place, a low obeisance to the poetess before he took any notice of the noble lady of the mansion. The latter then asked him, abruptly, whether the necklace (which lay glittering on the green cover of the card table,) was of his workmanship ? Cardillac scarcely deigned to cast a single glance at the jewels, but, keeping his eyes fixed on the Marchioness, packed both necklace and bracelets hastily into the box,—and pushed it hastily aside ; then, with a ghastly grin on his visage, he said, “ In truth, my lady Marchioness, one must have little experience in jewels, who believes even for a moment that these could have come from the hands of any other goldsmith in the world but Rene Cardillac. In short, they are my workmanship. “ This is absolutely inexplicable,” said the Marchioness. “ For whom were these ornaments made ? ” “ For myself alone,” answered Cardillac ; but perceiving that his auditors listened to him with distrust and suspicion,—“ Aye,” said he, “ your ladyship may think this very strange, but the fact is just what I have stated. Merely for the sake of exemplifying a fine pattern in jewelry, I collected my best stones together, and worked for my own pleasure, more industriously and carefully than I had ever done for other people. Not long ago the jewels which I had made up in this

manner, vanished inconceivably out of my workshop.”—
“Then, thank heaven!” said de Scuderi, “my troubles are at an end, and Master Rene, you will receive back from my hands the property of which you had been robbed by these unknown miscreants.”

She then repeated the circumstances under which the box had come into her possession, to all which Cardillac listened with his eyes fixed on the ground, and without making any answer, only now and then he exhibited strange gestures, uttering also divers interjections. “Ho—ho!—aye—aye! and, so—so!”—but when de Scuderi had ended, it seemed as if he were struggling vehemently with some new fantasies, which had risen upon him in the course of the narrative, and which held him in a state of suspense and irresolution. He rubbed his forehead, and sighed deeply,—drew his hand over his eyes as if he wept,—at length took the box which de Scuderi held out to him,—slowly and solemnly knelt before her, and said, “To you, noble lady, destiny has assigned these jewels. Moreover, I recollect now, for the first time, that when I was employed on them, I thought of you—nay, that I was absolutely working, not for myself alone, as I said before, but for your sake. Do not disdain then to receive from me, and to wear this ornament,—which is, in truth, the best that for a long time I have been able to finish.”

“*Eh bien!*” answered de Scuderi, “what are you thinking of, Master Rene?—Would it become one at my time of life, to trick herself out with diamonds and emeralds like these? And for what reason would you bestow gifts so lavishly upon me?—If I were handsome and young like the Marchioness de Fontanges, and rich to boot, I should certainly not let such ornaments out of my hands. But of what use would bracelets be to these withered arms, and why should I wear a necklace, when my neck is never uncovered?” Cardillac, while she spoke thus, had risen from his kneeling posture, and with wild looks, as if half distracted, still holding the box to Mademoiselle de Scuderi, he said, “Have

compassion on me, lady ! Do me this one favor, and accept of the jewels. You have yet no idea how deep is the veneration which I entertain for your virtue and talents. Take, I implore of you, my trifling present, only as an humble token of my sincere respect and devotion ! ”——

As de Scuderi would on no account touch the box, de Maintenon at last took it out of Cardillac's hands. “Nay, Mademoiselle,” said she “you speak always of your advanced age ; but what have you and I to do with years, if our shoulders are yet unbent by their load ? Are you not now rather acting like a young coquette, who would willingly, if she durst, seize on the forbidden fruit, provided it could be done without hands and fingers ? Do not refuse to accept from good Master Rene, as a free gift, that which others would gladly possess, and yet cannot obtain, even by the highest offers in money, as well as earnest prayers and entreaties.” De Maintenon had, with these words, forced the casket on de Scuderi, and now Cardillac again fell on his knees, kissed her hands, the hem of her garment, sighed, groaned, wept, sobbed,—started up, and finally overturned chairs and tables, so that glasses and china were broken into shivers, he ran headlong out of the house.

De Scuderi was now quite terrified. “For the love of heaven,” said she, “what is the matter with the man ? ” “Tell me then,” said de Maintenon, “for whom was it that you made up in a very lively humor, approaching to a vein of irony, which her character seldom exhibited. She laughed aloud, and said, “Now we have it, Mademoiselle ! Master Rene Cardillac has fallen desperately in love with you, and, according to established form and usage, begins his attack upon your heart with a storm of rich presents.” De Maintenon persisted in her raillery, till at length the gravity of her guest was overcome. She admonished de Scuderi not to be too cruel to her despairing lover ; and the poetess, giving the reins to her native humor, was at length led into the same strain of badinage. She allowed, that if the siege were really

to be carried on in this vehement manner, she could not escape being at last conquered, and affording to the world the extraordinary or unique example, of a goldsmith's bride, seventy-three years old, and of untarnished nobility. De Maintenon offered herself as bridesmaid, also to instruct her friend in the duties of good housewifery, which it was impossible that such *un petit enfant* of a girl could possibly know much about.

At last, when de Scuderi rose to take leave, (notwithstanding all these jokes,) she became once more very grave, and hesitated, when de Maintenon placed the jewel-box in her hands. "My lady Marchioness," said she, "I shall never be able to make any use of these ornaments. At one time or another, in whatever way it may have happened, they have been in the possession of that accursed band of outlaws, who, with the insolent assurance of the very devil himself, if not actually in league with him, commit robbery and murder in every street of the city. I cannot look on these glittering diamonds, without seeming to behold at the same time, the bleeding spectral form of the poor victim from whom they have been taken; for as to Cardillae's story, I place no reliance whatever upon his words, and in his behavior throughout, there appears to me somewhat frightful and mysterious. No doubt there are insurmountable difficulties in my way, if I should accuse master Rene of any share in the crimes by which every one is now so much alarmed; since he has always been considered as the very model of an honest, conscientious, though half crazy citizen; but I cannot conquer the apprehension, that, behind all his eccentricity, real or pretended, there lurks some horrid mystery. At all events, I shall certainly never wear the jewels." The Marchioness insisted that this was carrying scruples too far; but when de Scuderi begged of her seriously, and on her word of honor, to say how she would act in the same situation, de Maintenon answered firmly, and resolutely, that she would far rather throw the ornaments into the Seine than ever wear them.

Afterwards, as Scuderi, who, notwithstanding the time that she bestowed on her long romances, had a propensity to make rhymes on every chance occurrence of the day, turned the whole adventure, with the goldsmith, into very good mock heroics, which, on the following evening, she read over to the king at the chambers of de Maintenon. As might be supposed, she contrived, at Cardillac's expense, such a ridiculous picture of the goldsmith and his noble bride, aged seventy-three, that every one was highly diverted ;—suffice it, that the king laughed with all his might, and swore that Boileau himself had met with a rival, on which account de Scuderi's poem was, of course, set down as the wittiest that had ever appeared in the world. So the matter seemed at an end and was forgotten.

CHAPTER IV.

Several months had passed away, when it chanced that de Scuderi was one day driving along the Pont Neuf, in the glass-coach of the Duchess de Montausier. At this time, the invention of coaches with glass-windows was so new, that a crowd always collected when an equipage of that kind passed along the streets. So it happened in the present instance, that the gaping populace surrounded de Montausier's coach in such manner, that the horses could hardly get forward.—Suddenly, de Scuderi heard a great uproar on the bridge, and perceived a young man, who, by the dint of thrusts and fist-cuffs, was making his way forcibly through the crowd. On his approach nearer, she was painfully struck by the deadly pale countenance of the youth, whose features, though naturally fine, were now distorted by grief and anxiety. His eyes were constantly fixed on her during the whole tumult, while, with continued violence, he cleared the way before him, till at length he arrived at the door of the carriage, which, the glass being drawn up, he impetuously forced open ; then

threw a billet into the lap of de Scuderi, and again de-
out, and receiving curses and blows on all sides, he vani-
ghting his way as he had come.

It should have been already noticed, however, that as soon as the man had reached the coach-door, Martiniere, the waiting-maid, who was now in attendance on her mistress, fell back with a scream of terror, and hid her face on the cushion.— In vain did the lady de Scuderi pull the cord, and call to the coachman to stop. As if possessed by the devil, he lashed away at his horses, who foamed and snorted, reared and were restive, but, at last, in a brisk trot, thundered away across the bridge. De Scuderi emptied a whole bottle of *eau de Cologne* over the forehead and temples of the fainting abigail, who at last opened her eyes, though trembling in every limb, and almost convulsively clung to her mistress. “The saints protect us,” said she at last ;—“ what did the frightful man want ?—Good heaven ! It was he—it was the very same youth who came to us at midnight, terrified us out of our senses, and left the mysterious casket !” De Scuderi tried to pacify the poor girl, representing to her, that absolutely no mischief had been done ; and that the only point in question, at present, was to know what the billet contained. Accordingly, she unfolded the paper, and read these words :

“An evil destiny which *you* might avert, threatened to plunge me into the very abyss of destruction. I conjure you, even as a son would respectfully implore of a mother, that you will give back the necklace and bracelets which you received from me, to the goldsmith Rene Cardillac. Let this be done under any pretext ; but it may be best to say to him that some alteration is required in the arrangement of the jewels. Your own welfare—nay, your life depends upon this, and if you do not act according to my advice before the day after to-morrow, I shall force my way into your house ; and, in my despair, will put myself to death in your sight.”

“ Now, it is certain,” said de Scuderi, when she had read

the note, "that if this person really belongs to the noted band of thieves and murderers, yet his intentions towards me at least are not evil. If he had only succeeded in speaking with me that night, who knows what strange mysteries might have been brought to light, as to which I cannot now form even the remotest guess ; but whatever the truth may be, I shall certainly do what is required of me in this letter, were it for no other reason than to get rid of these abominable jewels, which appear to me like an absolute talisman of the devil, but which Cardillac, if we may judge by his past conduct, will not so easily let out of his possession, if he once gets them into his hands again."

On the very next day, de Scuderi intended to go with the necklace and bracelets to the goldsmith's house ; but it seemed that morning as if all the beaux esprits in Paris had conspired to attack the lady with an absolute storm of verses, plays, and romances. Scarcely had la Chapelle finished reading a scene from one of his new tragedies, by which he hoped to beat Racine completely off the field, when the latter himself entered, and with a long pathetic speech from "Phedra," completely knocked his antagonist to the ground. Then Boileau was obliged to come forward, and cast some of his brilliant rays of wit and humor through the gloom of this tragic atmosphere—in order that he himself might not be tired to death by a discussion of architecture, and the colonnades of the Louvre, into which he had been forced by Dr. Perreault. At length it was past mid-day, and de Scuderi was forced to go to the Duchess de Montausier. Thus her visit to Cardillac was unavoidably put off to the following day ; but meanwhile she suffered extraordinary disquietude of mind. The figure of the strange young man was constantly before her ; it seemed that she had long ere now been acquainted with the features, though she could not tell how nor where ; and yet these dim recollections appeared always ready to start forward into strength and reality. Her sleep, too, was disturbed by frightful dreams. She saw the unhappy man

clinging to the brink of a frightful precipice, or struggling in dark stormy waters, whence he stretched up his hands imploring her compassion. She thought, even, that it might perhaps have been in her power to prevent some enormous crime, of which the plot would have been revealed, if she had heard his confessions. Therefore, as soon as the morning broke, she summoned Martiniere, made her toilette in haste, and, provided with the casket of jewels, drove away to the house of the goldsmith.

On arriving in the *Rue de la Nicose*, near Cardillac's habitation, she was astonished to find the street crowded with people, all pressing forward with one intent to the same place, among whom, men, women, and children, shouted, screamed, and raged, as if determined to force their way, and with difficulty held back by the gens d'armes, who now surrounded the house. In this unaccountable hubbub, voices were heard calling aloud—"Tear him in pieces!—tear him limb from limb, the accursed treacherous murderer!" At length Desgrais made his appearance with a numerous posse, and forced a passage through the thick of the multitude. Then, after some interval the house-door breaks open, the figure of a man loaded with chains is brought out, and dragged away, followed by frightful execrations from the raging mob.

At the same moment when de Scuderi, almost overcome with terror and dark apprehensions, perceived this event, a shrill cry of distress struck on his ears: "Drive on—drive on!" cried she to the coachman, who, with a quick and clever turn of his horses, contrived to divide the thick mass of people, and to stop right before the door of Cardillac. There, on the threshold, she finds Desgrais, and at his feet a young girl of extraordinary beauty—with her dress in disorder, her hair dishevelled, and the wildness of despair in her countenance. She clings to the police-officer's knees, and, in a tone of the most heart-rending anguish, exclaims, "he is innocent—he is innocent!" In vain he and her attendants try to stop her cries and raise her from the ground. A

strong uncouth fellow at last laid hold of her arms, violently forcing her away from Desgrais ; stumbling awkwardly, and let the poor girl fall, who, without uttering another word, was precipitated down the stone steps of the staircase, till she lay as if dead on the street. De Scuderi could no longer remain silent. "In God's name," cried she, "what is the matter?—what is the cause of all this?" With her own hands she hastily opened the carriage-door, threw down the steps and alighted. Accordingly the people, with great respect, made room for the venerable lady, who, perceiving that some kind hearted *bourgeoises* had lifted up the unhappy girl and were rubbing her temples with *eau de Cologne*, turned to Desgrais, and with passionate eagerness, repeated her questions.—"Madame," answered the officer, "we have this morning discovered the most horrible crime which has been committed for many weeks. That worthy citizen, Rene Cardillac, has been found murdered, having been stabbed to the heart with a dagger ; we have proved that his journeyman, Olivier Brusson, is the murderer, and he has just now been led away to prison."

"But the young beautiful girl?" said de Scuderi, in a tone of anxious inquiry. "The girl," answered Desgrais, "is Madelon, the daughter of Cardillac, and the murderer was her accepted lover. Now, she has been weeping and howling for an hour past, that Olivier is innocent ; quite innocent. Doubtless, however, she is an accomplice in this deed, and perhaps in many others ; but we shall have her immediately carried to the *Conciergerie*." In speaking these words Desgrais cast such an ironical and malicious glance on the poor Madelon, that de Scuderi involuntarily trembled at his aspect. Just then his unfortunate victim began to breathe perceptibly ; but she lay with her eyes closed, and incapable of speech or motion ; so that the people were perplexed, and knew not whether to carry her into the house, or keep her where she lay, until, by farther assistance, she was restored to her senses. Much agitated, and with her eyes swimming in

tears, de Scuderi looked at the angelic countenance of the unfortunate girl, and her heart recoiled in horror from Desgrais and his associates. In a few moments after there was heard a sound of slow heavy steps on the staircase; the police-officers were bearing away the dead body of Cardillac, and de Scuderi, knowing that opportunity for interference would soon be lost, now came to a sudden determination. "I shall take the young woman home to my house," said she, "for she is now ill, and requires kindness and support after the distress that she has undergone. Her guilt remains to be proved, and I shall answer for her appearance when necessary; for the rest, you, Desgrais, will not fail to do your duty." These words being heard, a murmur of applause ran through the multitude. The women who stood nearest lifted up Madelon, and immediately hundreds of people thronged to the spot, wishing to render assistance, so that, as if floating in the air, the girl was borne along, and safely placed in the carriage. Meanwhile blessings were poured forth from the lips of all present on the venerable and dignified lady, who had thus rescued innocence from the fangs of the executioners.

By the kind attentions of Serons, the most celebrated physician in Paris, Madelon, who had long remained in a state of unconsciousness, was perfectly restored to recollection. De Scuderi herself completed what the physician had begun, endeavoring by all her arts of eloquence to kindle up rays of hope in the dark mind of her protégé; till at last the poor sufferer was relieved by a violent burst of tears, and she was enabled, though her voice was often choked by sobs, to relate in her own way, all that had occurred.

About midnight, she had been awake by knocking at the door of her bedroom, and had heard the voice of Olivier Brusson, conjuring her to rise up immediately, for her father was dying. In great agitation she had started up, and opened the door, when she found Olivier waiting for her; but his features were pale and disfigured; the perspiration was dropping from his forehead, and his limbs tottered so that he could

hardly support himself. He led the way to her father's work-room, whither she followed him, and where she found Cardillac lying with his eyes fixed and staring; for he was already in the agony of death. With a loud shriek, she had thrown herself down by her father, and then, for the first time, remarked that his clothes were drenched in blood. Brusson drew her gently away, and then began, as well as he could, to wash with astringent balsam a frightful wound in Cardillac's left side, and to bind it up. During this operation, the unfortunate man was restored to consciousness; he breathed more freely, and had looked up expressively at her and Olivier. Finally, he had taken her hand, placed in it that of the young man, and frequently pressed them together. Both then fell on their knees beside the dying man, expecting that he was to give them his blessing; but, with a cry of anguish, he raised himself up on his couch, immediately fell back again, and uttering a long deep groan, he expired.

Now they had both given way to tears and lamentations.—Olivier, however, found words to inform her, that he had been ordered by his master to attend him about midnight,—that they had gone out together, and, that Cardillac had, in his presence, been attacked and stabbed by an assassin. Hoping that the wound was not mortal, he had, with excessive labor and exertion, taken the poor man on his shoulders, and carried him home.

As soon as the morning broke, the people of the house, who had been disturbed by the noise of weeping and lamentation through the night, came up to their room, and found them still disconsolate, kneeling in prayer beside the dead body. Now the alarm was given; the *Marechaussee* broke into the house, and dragged off Olivier to prison, as the murderer of his master. To all this, Madelon now added the most moving description, how piously and faithfully he had always conducted himself, affirming that he had always shown towards Cardillac the respect and obedience of a son towards a father, and that the latter had fully appreciated his worth,

having chosen him, notwithstanding his poverty, for his son-in-law, and having proved that his cleverness as an artist, was only to be excelled by his steadiness, and excellent disposition. Every word uttered by Madelon seemed to bear the stamp of truth, and to be spoken from the heart. She concluded by declaring that if she had even beheld Olivier, in her own presence, inflict the death-wound on her father, she would rather have held this for a delusion of the devil, than have believed that her lover could have been guilty of such a horrible crime.

De Scuderi, deeply moved by the sufferings of Madelon, and now fully disposed to look on her lover as innocent, made farther inquiries, and found every thing confirmed that the poor girl had said, as to the domestic circumstances of the master and his journeyman. The people of the house, and in the neighborhood, universally praised Olivier as a model of regularity, devotion and industry. No one among them knew any evil action of which he had ever been guilty, and yet, when conversation turned on the murder, all shrugged their shoulders,—thought there was something here quite inconceivable and mysterious, so that it was impossible to say what conclusion should be drawn. Meanwhile, Olivier, when brought before the judges of the *Chambre Ardente*, denied, as Scuderi was informed, all participation in the deed. In this he persisted with the utmost constancy, and without any symptoms of embarrassment, affirming that his master had, in his presence, been attacked and knocked down, after which he had brought him home, where, being severely wounded, he had shortly afterwards expired. All this accorded precisely with the narrative of Madelon.

De Scuderi left no method untried, to obtain the most correct information. She inquired minutely whether there had lately been a quarrel between the master and his journeyman;—whether Olivier, though generally good-tempered, had not been subject to fits of passion,—that often mislead people into crimes, from which they would otherwise have recoiled with horror? But there was so much of the heartfelt inspi-

ration of truth in Madelon's account of the quiet domestic happiness in which they all three lived together, that at length every shadow of suspicion against Brusson vanished wholly from her mind. Indeed, setting aside all the circumstances which so decidedly pleaded his innocence, de Scuderi was unable to discover any motive on his part for such a deed. On the contrary, it could, in every point of view, only tend to his own destruction, and the overthrow of his worldly hopes. "He is poor," reasoned de Scuderi, "but clever as an artist; he succeeds in acquiring the confidence of the most eminent jeweller in Paris;—falls in love with the only daughter of his master, who approves of their attachment; thus happiness and prosperity seem to be secured to him for his whole life to come. But, notwithstanding all this, supposing that Olivier had been overpowered by sudden passion, and excited to such madness as to make an attack on his benefactor, yet what supernatural hypocrisy he must profess, in order to manage the atrocious deed in such a manner, and pretend to be so much afflicted?" In short, with an almost perfect conviction of his innocence, de Scuderi formed the determination, to rescue the unfortunate young man, whatever trouble and exertion this might cost.

CHAPTER V.

Before applying to the king, which was indeed the *dernier resort*, she resolved, in the first place, to have some private conversation with the President la Regnie, to request his attention to all the circumstances which pleaded in favor of the young man, and thus awaken in the president's mind an interest in the fate of the accused, which, without infringing the strictness of legal and official duty, he might benevolently impart to the other judges. La Regnie, of course, received de Scuderi with the highest respect, to which the venerable lady, whom the king himself always addressed with deference, was so justly entitled. He listened quietly to all that she

had to say of the domestic circumstances of Olivier and his excellent character ; but to this she did not obtain one favorable word, or even interjection, in return. A slight and almost scornful smile, now and then threatening to change into a grin, was the only proof afforded by la Regnie, that the assertions, the earnest admonitions of de Scuderi did not fall on ears altogether deaf and inattentive. She insisted that every righteous judge must beware of being an enemy of the prisoner ; on the contrary, he must give his attention even to the minutest particle of evidence that could be looked upon as exculpatory. At last, when the lady had exhausted all her arguments, and, with her handkerchief at her eyes, remained silent, la Regnie began :—" Doubtless, my lady, it is an admirable proof of your benevolence of heart, that you should have been thus moved by the tears and protestations of a young girl who is in love, and that you should have even believed all that she has asserted. Nay, it is hardly to be expected that a mind so constituted as yours should conceive the existence of a crime so horrible. But it is quite different with one who, in order to fulfil his painful duties as a judge, is obliged to tear off the mask from the basest cunning and hypocrisy. At the same time, you, my lady, must certainly perceive that it is no part of my business, nor even consistent with my duty, to develop and reveal to every one the manner in which a criminal process is carried through and decided. I fulfil my duty, and, being conscious of this, I am, as to the opinion of the world, wholly indifferent. It is absolutely requisite that the abandoned criminals, by whom we are now-a-days beset and tormented, should be made to tremble before the court of the *Chambre Ardente*, whose punishments are never mitigated, but consist only of death by the scaffold or by fire. In your presence, however, Mademoiselle, I would not willingly appear a monster of harshness and cruelty. Therefore, allow me, in as few words as possible, to place clearly and unequivocally before you the guilt of this young miscreant, on whom, God be thanked, the

sword of just vengeance is about to fall. When you have heard my account of the evidence, your powerful understanding will then lead you to condemn that kind-hearted credulity which, though it may be praiseworthy in the lady de Scuderi, would, on my part as a judge, be wholly unbecoming, and, indeed, unpardonable.

“ So, then, to commence : Rene Cardillac is one morning found murdered ; as usual, in such cases, he has been stabbed to the heart with a stiletto. No one is beside him but his apprentice, Olivier Brusson, and his daughter. In the bed-chamber of Brusson, amongst other effects that were examined, is found a dagger covered with blood, still fresh, and which, on being tried, fits exactly into the wound.” “ Cardillac,” says the young man, “ was, in my presence, attacked and knocked down on the streets at midnight.” “ The villains then wished to rob him ? ” “ That,” says he, “ I cannot tell.” “ But you were walking with him, and was it not possible for you to lay hold of the murderers, and call for help ? ” “ My master,” he answers, “ was fifteen or twenty steps before me, and I followed him.” “ Wherefore, in the name of wonder, were you at such a distance ? ” “ My master would have it so.” “ But what, in all the world, could the goldsmith, Cardillac, have to do at such an hour on the street ? ” “ That again,” answers he, “ I cannot answer.” “ But, till now,” says the *Chambre Ardente*, “ he was never known to leave his own house after nine o’clock in the evening.” At this remark, Olivier, instead of returning any direct answer, falters, grows confused, bursts into tears, then swears over again that Cardillac had actually gone out of his house on the night referred to, and had, consequently, been put to death.

“ But your ladyship will please to observe, with attention, what now follows : It has been proved, even to an absolute certainty, that Cardillac did not, on that evening, leave his own house, and, of course, Olivier’s story of the midnight walk is an infamous fabrication. The house-door is provided

with a large and heavy lock, which, on opening and shutting, makes a loud grating noise. Then, too, the door itself creaks violently on its hinges, so that by the trials that have been made, we know that, from the garret to the cellar, it disturbs all the inhabitants. Besides, on the ground-floor of this building, and therefore, quite close to the outward door, lives an old gentleman, Monsieur Claude Patru, now in his eightieth year, but still in possession of all his faculties; and this old man is attended by a female servant. These people heard Rene Cardillac, on the night of the murder, come down stairs exactly at nine o'clock; close and bolt the outward gate with great noise; then return up stairs, read aloud a portion of the evening service; and at last retire to his bedroom, of which also, they heard him close the door with vehemence. This Monsieur Claude Patru, as it often happens to old persons, could hardly ever sleep, and, through this night particularly, he had not been able to close his eyes. Accordingly, the old woman who attends him, went, as she depones, about half-past ten o'clock, into the kitchen for light, trimmed the lamp, and replenished it with oil, then seated herself at a table beside Monsieur Patru, with a favorite book, which she read aloud, while the old gentleman, following out his own reveries, now seated himself in his arm-chair, now rose up and walked about, all for the sake of becoming wearied, and obtaining sleep.

“The whole house remained tranquil until after midnight. Then the woman suddenly heard heavy steps over her head, and a noise as if of some great weight falling to the ground. Immediately thereafter, she heard also hollow groans, and her old master became like herself alarmed and anxious. A mysterious foreboding of some horrid event passed through their minds, and the discovery of the morning proved that their suspicions were but too well grounded.” “But,” interrupted de Scuderi, “could you, from all the circumstances which have been stated on either side, find out any adequate motive for Olivier Brusson committing such an atrocious and unparal-

leled crime?" "Humph!" answered la Regnie, with another ironical smile, "Cardillac was not poor; he was in the possession of admirable diamonds!" "Yet," said de Scuderi, "was not his daughter heiress of all that property? You forget that Olivier was to have been son-in-law to the goldsmith?" "That is no decisive proof," answered la Regnie; "we are not obliged to admit that Brusson committed the crime solely on his own account, though no doubt admitted to his share." "What means this talk of sharing and agency?" said de Scuderi. "Your ladyship will please to observe," answered la Regnie, "that Brusson would, long ere now, have been led to the scaffold, were it not that he is obviously connected with that horrid conspiracy, which has hitherto baffled our inquiries, and kept all Paris in suspense and agitation. It is suspected, indeed known, that this miscreant belonged to that band of robbers who have held in scorn and mockery all measures taken against them by the ministers of justice, and have continued to carry on their enormities securely and without punishment. Through his confessions, however, which we shall in due time extort, that mystery will no doubt be rendered clear. I should have observed, that Cardillac's wound is precisely similar to those which have been examined on the dead bodies of other victims, who were found murdered in the streets and courts, or corridors of houses. But the circumstance which we consider as of all the most decisive is, that, since Brusson's arrestment, these robberies and murders, which before happened almost every night, have entirely ceased, and one may now walk on the streets just as securely by night as by day. This alone affords sufficient presumptive proof, that Olivier must have been at the head of these assassins, and though, to this hour, he has persisted in asserting his innocence, yet we have means enough of forcing him to confess, however great his obstinacy may be."

"But then, as to Madelon," said de Scuderi, "the poor innocent girl!" "Ha, ha!" answered la Regnie, "who

can give sufficient assurance that she has not been an accomplice? What does she care for her father's death? It is only for the murderer's sake that her tears flow so freely."—"What do you say?" cried de Scuderi, "it is impossible. Would this poor blameless child aim against her father's life?" "Oh, ho!" said Regnie, shrugging his shoulders, "your ladyship seems to have forgotten the conduct of la Brinvilliers. You will be so good as to forgive me, if I find myself, ere long, necessitated to drag this favorite from your protecting arms, and to lodge her in the *Conciergerie*."

At this horrible suggestion, a cold shuddering pervaded the whole frame of the kind-hearted de Scuderi. It seemed to her as if, in the presence of this abominable man, all truth and virtue were annihilated; that in every heart he could find out concealed propensities to the most diabolical crimes. "At all events, do not forget that even a judge ought to be humane!" said she, and these words were all that, with a faltering and suppressed voice, she was able to bring out.—When just on the point of descending the staircase to which the president, with ceremonious politeness, accompanied her, a sudden thought rose in her mind. "Would it be granted me," said she, "to speak with the unhappy youth in prison?" The president hearing this abrupt question, looked at her with an air of doubt and reflection; then his visage twisted itself into an ironical smile, which was to him quite peculiar. "Certainly," answered he, "this may be allowed. I perceive, my lady, that you are yet more inclined to trust to your own benevolent impulses, than to any legal proofs; and as you wish to try Brusson after your own manner, within two hours hence, the gates of the *Conciergerie* shall be opened, and this criminal ordered to attend you. Think, however, whether it will not be too abhorrent to your feelings to enter these dark abodes of profligacy and punishment, where you may encounter vice in its varied stages of suffering and degradation."

In truth, however, de Scuderi would by no means be con-

vinced of the young man's guilt. Many evidences had doubtless been brought forward against him ; and after such apparent proofs, perhaps no judge in the world could have acted otherwise than la Regnie had done. But then, the innocent looks and grief of Madelon, with the picture she had drawn of domestic happiness, acted as a complete counterbalance to every evil suspicion, and de Scuderi would rather admit the existence of some inexplicable and even supernatural mystery, than believe that at which her inmost heart revolted. She now determined, therefore, that she would make Olivier relate over again all that had happened on that fatal night ; to watch whether his account corresponded exactly to that of Madelon, and, as far as possible, to reconcile those difficulties with which the judges would perhaps give themselves no farther trouble, as they considered the prisoner's guilt so clearly established.

On arriving at the *Conciergerie*, de Scuderi was conducted into a large and well lighted chamber, where the rattling of chains soon announced Brusson's approach ; but no sooner had he crossed the threshold, than, to the astonishment of the attendants, de Scuderi trembled, grew deadly pale, and without uttering a word, sank fainting into a chair. When she recovered, the prisoner was no longer in the room, and she demanded impatiently that she should be led back to her carriage. She was determined not to remain another moment in this abode of crime and misery, for, alas ! she had recognized in Brusson, at the very first glance, the young man who had thrown the billet into her carriage on the *Pont Neuf*, and who, (according to Martiniere's evidence,) had brought her the casket with the jewels. La Regnie's horrid suggestions were therefore too surely confirmed, and as Brusson belonged evidently to that band of midnight assassins, there could be little or no doubt that he was the murderer of his master.— But still, the beauty, youth, and apparent innocence of Madelon ? Never having been till now so bitterly deceived by her own benevolent impulses, and forced to admit the existence

of guilt, which she would before have thought impossible, she was reduced almost to utter despair, and it seemed to her, as if there were no longer any truth and virtue in the world!—As it usually happens that a powerful and active mind, if it once takes up an image or impression, always seeks and finds means to color it more forcibly and vividly, de Scuderi, when she reflected once more on the murder, and on every circumstance of Madelon's narrative, found much that tended to nourish her evil suspicions, till even these very points of evidence, which she had before received as proofs of the poor girl's innocence and purity, now seemed only manifestations of the basest hypocrisy and deception. That heart-rending grief, and those floods of tears, so piteous to hear and look upon, might have been extorted merely by the terror of seeing her lover bleed on the scaffold, or, indeed, of falling herself a victim to the same punishment. She determined at last that she should shake off at once and forever, the vile serpent whom she had intended so rashly to cherish in her bosom, and with this fixed resolution, she alighted from her carriage, on her return from la Regnie.

When she entered her own apartment Madelon was there, anxiously awaiting her arrival. She threw herself at the feet of her benefactress, and with uplifted eyes, and clasped hands, looking as innocent as an angel from heaven, she exclaimed in the most heart-rending tone, "Dearest lady! Oh, say that you have brought me hope and consolation!" De Scuderi, not without great effort, regaining self-possession, and endeavoring to give her voice as much gravity and calmness as possible, answered, "Go, go! Console yourself as well as you can for the fate of the murderer, whom a just punishment now awaits for the deeds of which he has been convicted.—God grant that the guilt of some such assassination may not also weigh on your conscience!" "Oh, heaven have mercy;" cried Madelon—"all now is lost!" and with a piercing shriek, she fell fainting on the ground. De Scuderi gave her in charge to la Martiniere, and retired into another room.

Almost heart-broken, and utterly discontented with herself and every one else, de Scuderi scarcely wished to live any longer in a world haunted by such abominable deceit and hypocrisy. She complained bitterly of her capricious destiny, which had granted to her so many years, during which her reliance on her own judgment in distinguishing between vice and virtue had remained unshaken, and now, in her old age, had at once annihilated, as if in scorn and mockery, all the beautiful illusions by which her spirits had been hitherto supported; for with whom had she ever thought herself more secure than with this unfortunate girl? While she was thus occupied, it chanced that she overheard some conversation between Madelon and la Martiniere. She could distinguish that the former said, in a low, soft voice, "Alas! and she too has been deluded at last by the cruel men! Oh wretched Madelon!—Poor, unfortunate Olivier!" The tone in which these words were uttered struck de Scuderi to the heart, and again she felt, involuntarily, an apprehension that there might be some hidden mystery, which, if revealed, would completely prove Brusson's innocence; and, tormented by this conflict of impressions, she could not help exclaiming,—“What demon has involved me in this affair, which becomes so intolerable that it will actually cost me my life!”

Just then Baptiste came into the room, pale and trembling, with the intelligence that Desgrais was at the door, and demanded instant admittance. Since the trial of the abominable la Voisin, the appearance of this officer at any house was the sure sign of some criminal accusation, and on this account the faithful porter had been so terrified. De Scuderi, however, smiled very composedly. “What is the matter with you, Baptiste?” said she; “perhaps you think my name has been discovered on la Voisin's catalogue?” “God forbid,” answered Baptiste; “how can your ladyship speak of such a thing? But, still, the horrible man, Desgrais, talks and looks so mysteriously, and he is so urgent, that it seems as if he had not a single moment to wait your leisure.” “Well, then,” answered

de Seuderi, "bring the man to this room as soon as possible ; for however horrible he appears in your estimation, his visit causes to me no anxiety whatever." Baptiste went accordingly, and soon returned, followed by this unwelcome guest.

"The President," said Desgrais, speaking all the way as he came into the room, as if to save time,—“the President la Regnie has sent me to your ladyship, with a request to which he could scarcely hope that you would agree, were it not that he is so well aware of your extraordinary courage, and your zeal for justice ; moreover, were it not that the last and only means to unravel the mystery attending the assassination of Cardillac seem to rest in your hands. Besides, he informed me that you have already taken a lively interest in that criminal process, by which the whole attention of the *Chambre Ardente* is now occupied. Olivier Brusson, since the time when, as I am informed, he was permitted to see your ladyship at the *Conciergerie*, has been half distracted. Before that interview, he seemed at times disposed to make a confession ; but now again he swears by heaven and all the saints, that, as to the murder of Cardillac, he is perfectly innocent, though, for his other crimes, he indeed deserves punishment. You will observe, Mademoiselle, that this last clause points at some concealed guilt, of which the very existence was not yet suspected, and which may prove far more important than Cardillac's assassination ; but our endeavors have been completely baffled as to extorting from him even a single word more. Even the threat of putting him on the rack seems not to have had any influence. Meanwhile he beset us with the most earnest prayers and supplications that we should grant him another meeting with you ; for it is to the lady de Seuderi alone that he is willing to make a full confession. Our humble request is, that you will have the condescension and goodness to hear in private the deposition of Olivier Brusson.”

“How is this ?” cried de Seuderi, quite angrily ; “am I then to serve as an agent of your criminal court ? Am I to

abuse the confidence reposed in me by an unhappy man, and endeavor to bring him to the scaffold? No, no, Desgrais!—Brusson may be a murderer, but I shall never act such a degrading part as you would have me to take against him.—Moreover, I have no wish to be acquainted with any of the mysteries which may weigh on his conscience, and which if they were entrusted to me, I should look upon as sacred, and never to be divulged.”—“Perhaps,” said Desgrais, in a sneering tone, “your ladyship’s intentions in that respect might be changed, if you had once heard his confession. But have you not yourself earnestly enjoined the President to be humane? He now implicitly follows your advice, by giving way to the foolish requests of his criminal, and is willing to try the last possible means before having recourse to the torture, to which, in truth, Brusson should long ere this have been doomed.” At these words de Scuderi could not help shuddering with apprehension. “Your ladyship will please to observe,” added Desgrais, “that we should by no means wish you again to visit the gloomy chambers of the *Conciergerie*, which may, no doubt, have inspired you with disgust and aversion. In the quiet of the night, when no notice will be taken of our proceedings, Brusson may be brought to your house, where, without being overheard, (though we shall doubtless keep a strict watch on the doors and windows,) he may, unconstrained and voluntarily, make his confession.—That your ladyship has nothing to fear from this unfortunate man, I am thoroughly convinced, and, on that point, could set my own life at stake. He speaks of you with the greatest respect and veneration, insisting too, that if his cruel destiny had not denied him an interview with the lady de Scuderi at the proper time, all his present misery would have been averted. Finally, it will remain completely at your choice, after the meeting, to repeat what Brusson has divulged, or to conceal it, as you may think proper.”

De Scuderi remained for some time silent and lost in reflection. She would gladly have avoided this interview; yet

it seemed as if Providence had chosen her as an agent to clear up this intricate mystery, and that it was impossible for her now to retreat. At length, having formed her resolution, she answered Desgrais with great dignity. "The task devolved on me is indeed painful and repugnant to my feelings; but Heaven will grant me patience and composure to undergo that which I know to be my duty. Bring the criminal hither this evening, and I shall speak with him as you desire."

CHAPTER VI.

Just as formerly, when Brusson came with the jewels, there was a knocking about midnight at the house-door, which Baptiste, who was forewarned of this visit, immediately opened. A shivering coldness pervaded every nerve in de Scuderi's frame, when, by the measured steps and hollow murmuring voices, she was aware that the *gens d'armes*, who had brought the prisoner, divided their forces, and took their stations to keep watch in different corners of the corridor. At last the door of her chamber was slowly opened. Desgrais stepped in, and behind him the criminal, who was now freed from his fetters, and well dressed. "Please your ladyship," said the police officer, "here is the prisoner;" and, according to promise, he retired, without another word, to his post in the corridor.

Brusson now fell on his knees before the venerable lady, clasped his hands imploringly, and burst into tears,—while de Scuderi became very pale, and looked at him without being able to speak. Though his features were now changed and disfigured by the sufferings he had undergone, yet on his naturally fine countenance there was an expression of truth and honesty, which pleaded more than words could have done in his favor. Besides, the longer that de Scuderi observed him, the more forcibly there arose on her mind the idea of some person whom she had once known and loved, but whose

name it was impossible for her to recall. By degrees, all her former feelings of aversion and terror declined away. She forgot that it was the murderer of Cardillac who knelt before her, and spoke to him in that graceful tone of quiet benevolence which was so peculiarly her own, asking him why he had requested this meeting, and what he had to disclose to her? The youth still remained in his suppliant posture, heaved a deep sigh, and answered, "Oh, my worthy benefactress, is it then possible that all remembrance of me has vanished from your mind?"

De Scuderi replied, that she had certainly found a resemblance between him, and some one that had been well known to her; moreover, that he was indebted solely to this likeness, if she could now get the better of her abhorrence, and quietly listen to the confession of an assassin. At these words Brusson was evidently much hurt; he rose indignantly, and retired a few paces, while his brows assumed a lowering and fixed expression. "It seems then," said he, "that your ladyship has forgotten Anne Guiot; but, however that may be, it is her son Olivier, the boy whom in his infancy you have so often held caressingly in your arms, who now stands before you."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed de Scuderi, and with both hands covering her face, she sank back on the sofa. There was, indeed, reasonable ground for the painful sensations by which she was now overpowered. Anne Guiot, the neglected daughter of a poor citizen, had been from childhood protected in de Scuderi's house, who had behaved to her with the utmost kindness and affection, even like a mother. After she had grown up to a woman's estate, it happened that there was a handsome young man, named Claude Brusson, who paid his addresses to the girl. As this youth was a very clever watch-maker, and as such would scarcely fail to gain a sufficient livelihood in Paris, de Scuderi knowing that Anne was much attached to him, had no hesitation in agreeing to their marriage. The young couple set up house for themselves, seemed

to be quite happy in their domestic circumstances, and what added much to their felicity, was the birth of a beautiful boy, who was the perfect image of his mother.

De Scuderi made an absolute idol of the little Olivier, whom she used to keep whole days from his parents to play with, and caress ;—the boy, of course, became accustomed to her, and staid with her just as willingly as he would have done with his own father and mother. Three years had passed away, when the envy and opposition of Brusson's professional brethren had such influence against him, that his business every day decreased, and he was at last reduced to the danger of actual want. Under these circumstances he was seized with an ardent longing to visit his native city of Geneva, and, consequently, his family was removed thither, notwithstanding the objections of De Scuderi, who wished that Brusson should remain at Paris, and promised him all the support in her power. From Switzerland, Anne wrote several affectionate letters, and seemed as before quite contented ; then, all at once, without assigning any reason, she became silent, and de Scuderi could only conclude that the life she led at Geneva, was so happy and prosperous, that it had effaced from her mind all recollection of her former circumstances in Paris.—Since the date of the watchmaker's removal and establishment in Switzerland, there had passed an interval of twenty-three years, so that de Scuderi had almost forgotten him and his affairs—nor had the surname of Brusson ever been familiar to her.

“ Oh, horrible ! ” cried she, forcing herself to look up, “ Thou art Olivier, the son of my beloved Anne Guiot,—and *now* ? ”—“ Indeed,” said Olivier, “ you could never have anticipated, that the boy whom you had so often caressed with all a mother's fondness, would one day appear before you as a man accused of the most horrible crimes. I am, indeed, not guiltless ; and there are errors which the *Chambre Ardente* may justly charge against me. But I swear most solemnly, even by my hopes of heaven's mercy in my last moments,

that I am guiltless of every assassination. It was not by my hand, nor through any connivance of mine, that the unhappy Cardillac met his fate." Olivier's voice faltered, and de Scuderi pointed to a chair, on which, trembling, as if unable to support himself, he now took his place."

"I have had time enough," said he, "to prepare myself for this conversation, which I look upon as the last favor which can be granted to me in this world, by that righteous Providence with whom I have already made my peace. I have at least acquired sufficient composure and self-possession to give a distinct narrative of my unparalleled misfortunes, to which I entreat that you will listen with patience, however much you may be shocked and surprised by the discovery of a secret, such as could never have been guessed at, and which may seem almost incredible.

"Would to heaven my poor father had never left Paris!—My earliest recollections of Geneva present to me only the tears and lamentations of my unfortunate parents, with whom I also wept bitterly, without knowing wherefore. Afterwards, as I grew up to boyhood, I became aware, by my own sad experience, of the poverty and privations under which they now lived, for my father found himself deceived and disappointed in every hope which he had cherished on coming to his native country, till, at length, quite overcome, and worn out by his afflictions, he died, just as he had succeeded in placing me with a goldsmith, as a journeyman apprentice.—My mother often spoke of the noble minded and benevolent Mademoiselle de Scuderi, and wished to write to you of her distresses. Many letters were begun; but then she was too soon overcome by that sickly cowardice and apathy, which so often accompany misfortune. This feeling, and, perhaps, too, a false shame that often preys on a wounded spirit, prevented her from coming to any effectual resolution, and, finally, within a few months of my father's death, my mother followed him to the grave.

"Poor unfortunate Anne!" cried de Scuderi, again over-

come by her feelings. "But, I thank heaven, that she is removed from this wicked world, and has not lived to see the day, when her son, branded with ignominy, is to fall by the hands of the executioners." At these words, Olivier uttered a groan of anguish, and raised his eyes with a wild unnatural glare. There was a noise, too, outside the door, of steps moving rapidly backwards and forwards. "Ho, ho!" said Olivier, with a bitter smile, and recovering his self-possession; "Desgrais keeps his comrades on the alert, as if, forsooth, I could here, or any where else, escape from their clutches!

"But let me proceed. I was severely, and, indeed, cruelly treated by my new master, although I soon proved myself a good workman, and even excelled my instructor. It happened, one day, that there came a stranger to our wareroom, who wished to buy some articles of jewelry. Looking at a very handsome necklace, which was of my workmanship, he clapped me familiarly on the shoulder, and said, 'Ha! my young friend, this is, indeed, admirably finished! I know not any man who could excel you, unless it were Rene Cardillac, who is, out of sight, the best goldsmith in the world. You should, in my opinion, betake yourself to him, for he would probably be very glad to receive you into his house as an assistant; and, on the other hand, it is only from him that you could yet learn to improve in your handicraft.'

"The words of this stranger made a deep impression on me. I could no longer be contented in Geneva, but cherished a vehement desire of returning to my native France. At last, I succeeded in getting rid of my engagements to my master, and, in due time, arrived in Paris, where I inquired for Rene Cardillac, by whom I was received with such coldness and harshness of manner, that an inexperienced youth might well have been utterly discouraged. I would not give up my purpose, however, and insisted that he should give me some employment, however trifling and insignificant,—so that I was, at last, ordered to make up, and finish in my best manner, a small ring. When I brought him my workman-

ship, he fixed on me his keen penetrating eyes, as if he would look me through and through. At last, he said, 'Brusson, thou art, in truth, an excellent clever fellow. Thou shalt henceforth live in my house, and assist me in the workshop. I shall allow thee a good salary, and thou shalt have no reason to be dissatisfied with thy place.'

"Cardillac kept his word. I was received kindly at our next meeting, and had no reason to complain of the treatment that I experienced. For several weeks I had been in the house without seeing Madelon, who was, at that time, living with a distant relation in the country. At length she returned home, and, oh heaven! how was I astonished at the innocent angelic beauty of that girl! Was there ever any mortal that loved so fondly and fervently as I have done,—and *now*,—oh Madelon!"

Olivier was here overcome by his feelings, and for some time could not proceed. He covered his face with both hands, and even sobbed violently; but with a determined effort, he resumed, as follows:—

"Madelon often looked at me with an expressive glance, in which I thought that I could read her approval of my evident admiration. She used also to come more and more frequently into the workshop, till, in short, I discovered with rapture that she loved me, and closely as her father might have watched us, many a stolen kiss or pressure of the hand served for a token of the agreement thus mutually understood between us. Cardillac, indeed, never seemed to observe any of our proceedings; but I had intended, after I had proved myself deserving of his good opinion, and had passed my years of trial, to pay my addresses openly to Madelon. One morning, however, when I was about to begin my work for the day, Cardillac suddenly came to me with his eyes flashing contempt and indignation. 'I have no longer any need of your assistance,' said he,—'Get out of my house within this very hour, and never again come in my sight.—The reason why I cannot suffer your presence any longer

requires no explanation. The fruit at which you have aimed may be tempting indeed ; but it hangs too high for your reach : therefore pack up and begone ! ’

“ I was about to speak, but without a moment’s warning, as if struck with a sudden madness, he seized me by the collar and forced me out of doors with such violence, that I fell down stairs, and was severely hurt in the head and right arm. I left his home with my heart almost bursting with grief and rage, and betook myself to the farthest end of the Faubourg de St. Martin, where I had an acquaintance who received me into the ground-flour of his humble dwelling.— Here my agitations continued, and I could never rest by night nor day. In the night, indeed, I used to wander about Cardillac’s house, hoping that Madelon perhaps might hear my complaints, which at intervals I could not repress ;—and if she could only succeed in speaking to me from a window, I would have tried to persuade her into adopting some one of many desperate plans which I had been revolving to effect her escape.

“ Now, my lady, you will please to observe, that adjoining Cardillac’s house in the *Rue de la Nicaise*, is a high court wall, ornamented with niches, in some of which there are yet old mouldering statues cut in freestone. It happened once that I was hiding myself near one of the statues, and gazing up to the windows of the house, that looked into the square court, of which this high wall is the boundary. Suddenly, while I was then on the watch, I perceived light in the work-room of Cardillac. It was now midnight, at which hour my master never used to be awake ; for, as the clock struck nine, he punctually went to rest. My heart beat violently, for I thought it possible that some accident might have occurred, in consequence of which I might once more obtain entrance into the house ; but the light soon after vanished. Determining to watch as long as possible, in order to escape all risk of observation, I forced myself into the niche behind the statue ; but scarcely had I taken my place when I was obliged to recoil

with a feeling almost of horror, for I felt an opposing pressure, precisely as if the stone image had become suddenly a living being. I retired to a little distance, keeping always in the shade, and saw that the statue slowly turned round, and from behind it there emerged a dark figure in a long mantle, that with cautious light steps glided away into the street. I ran up to the statue and tried to move it, but it now stood fixed as usual. Without reflection, and forced on by some irresistible inward impulse, I left the court and followed the mysterious figure, till, just beside a shrine of the blest Virgin, he chanced to turn half round, and the full glare of the consecrated lamp fell upon his visage. It was Cardillac.

“An indescribable mood of terror and indefinable apprehension now overcame me. As if spell-driven, I must move on after this ghostly sleep-walker, for as such Cardillac now appeared to me, though it was not the time of the full moon, when that fearful malady generally seizes its victims. At last, he suddenly turned off to one side, and vanished in the dark shadows of the night. As I went on, however, I became perfectly aware where he was, for being acquainted with the slightest sounds of his voice, I heard, by certain habitual interjections, in a low muttering tone, that he had stationed himself in the portal of a neighboring house. ‘What can be the meaning of all this?’ said I to myself, ‘and what can he intend to do?’ At the same time, I remained close within the shade of the houses, so that I was quite unobserved. I had not waited long, when there came a man with a grand plume of feathers in his hat, clattering with his military spurs, and singing all the way, as if elated with wine, ‘*C’est l’amour, l’amour, l’amour!*’ and so forth. Like a tiger on his prey, Cardillac started from his hiding place, and attacked the man, who did not utter a groan or shout, but fell instantly, as if lifeless, to the ground. I rushed forward to prevent further violence, and met the assassin face to face, as he stepped across the body of the murdered man. ‘Master Cardillac!’ cried I, in my loudest voice, ‘what are you about here?’

He made no reply, but with one half-suppressed exclamation of rage and resentment, passed by me with incredible speed, and vanished.

"I was now so much agitated, that I scarcely knew where I was, or what I did; however, with tottering steps, I drew near to Cardillac's victim, and knelt down beside him on the pavement. I thought life could not yet be extinct, and that he might possibly recover; however, I soon found he was quite dead. Meanwhile the *marechaussee* had come up un-awares, and now surrounded me. 'So soon another murder!' cried one of them, 'and no doubt by the hands of the same incarnate demons! Hilloah, young man, what are you about there? You are one of the band, perhaps,—away with you to prison!' Accordingly they seized me as if I had been the criminal, while I was scarcely able to stammer out, that I was quite incapable of such a horrid deed, and that they should let me depart in peace. At last one of them held the light to my face, and laughed aloud. 'Why,' said he, 'this is Olivier Brusson, the goldsmith's apprentice—he who now works with that good honest citizen, Master Rene Cardillac. Aye, forsooth, he would murder people in the streets? And it looks very like an assassin to stay here lamenting over a dead body, and allow himself to be taken prisoner! But how did this happen, Brusson? Tell your story boldly, and at once.'

" 'I was walking along the street,' said I, 'when I saw a man start from the wall, attack him who is now lying there, and knock him down. Then, as in my terror I cried aloud, the assassin ran away with the speed of lightning, and disappeared. I wished now to see whether his unfortunate victim were really dead, or might be recovered.' 'That was needless enough,' cried one of them, who had lifted up the dead body; 'these demons always make sure work, and the dagger has gone, as usual, right through the heart.' 'The devil fetch them!' cried another; 'it has happened now just as the last time. We came only a few minutes too late.'

Afterwards, as I said, (and this was, indeed, a great crime,) that I could not give any farther information, they let me go, and retired, bearing away the murdered man.

“I cannot describe adequately my feelings when I was thus left alone. It seemed to me as if I had been under the dominion of some hideous dream, from which I must now awake, and wonder that I could have been so deceived! Cardillac, the father of my beloved Madelon, transformed all at once into an ignominious, cruel-hearted assassin! Notwithstanding the violence with which he had conducted himself towards me, I could not have imagined any event more utterly impossible. Overpowered by these reflections, I had sunk down, almost fainting, on the stone steps of a house-door, and remained there unconscious how the time passed, till the morning broke, and all was light around me. Then I observed an officer’s hat, richly adorned with lace and feathers, lying on the pavement, and the idea that Cardillac’s abominable deed had been perpetrated on the very spot where I now rested, rose in my mind with such intolerable force, that I started up in horror, and ran as fast as I could to my own lodgings.

“Quite confused, and unable to follow out distinctly any one train of thought, I was sitting in my lonely apartment, when, to my great surprise, the door opened, and Rene Cardillac stood before me. ‘In God’s name,’ said I, ‘what can you want here?’ Not attending to this, he came up, and smiled upon me with an expression of friendly confidence, which only increased my inward agitation and abhorrence. He drew in an old broken stool, and took his place beside me, while I was not able to lift myself from the straw couch on which I had lain down.

“‘Now then, Olivier,’ he began, ‘how have you lived, and how are you spending your time? My conduct was, indeed, shamefully rash, when I turned you out of my house; for every moment since then, I have deeply regretted your absence. At present, for example, I have some jewelry in

hand, which I cannot finish without your assistance. What would you think of again taking your place in my work-room? You are silent! Yes, I know that I have injured and insulted you. It is needless to deny that I was violently enraged against you, on account of your attachment to my daughter Madelon. But since then, I have carefully reflected on the matter, and decided that, considering the cleverness, industry and fidelity which you have always shown, I ought not to wish for any better son-in-law. Come with me, then, if you are not unwilling, and you shall have my free permission to obtain Madelon, as soon as you can, for your betrothed bride.'

"Cardillac's words agitated me to the heart. I shuddered at his enormous treachery, and could scarcely bring out a word. 'You hesitate,' said he, in a sharp tone, fixing on me his intense glaring eyes. 'You hesitate! And, perhaps, you could not go with me to-day. You have other plans in view, and will probably pay a visit to Desgrais, or get yourself introduced to D'Argensen or la Regnie?—But, take care, young man, that the clutches of these executioners, whom you are about to rouse for the destruction of another, do not turn against yourself, and rend you!'—Here, my indignation suddenly broke out in words.

" 'Let those,' said I, 'who are convicted by their own conscience, entertain fears of such executioners. I, at least, can front them without apprehension.' 'The truth is,' said Cardillac, still retaining perfect composure, 'it is an honor for you to be in my employment, as I am universally known and celebrated as the first artizan in Paris; and, at the same time, my character is so well established, that every evil report against me would recoil heavily on the head of the calumniator. As for Madelon, however, I must confess to you, that it is wholly to her that you owe this visit from me. She is attached to you, with a degree of constancy and ardor, which, in so young a girl, I should hardly have thought possible. As soon as she knew that you were away, she fell at my feet, burst into tears, and confessed that, without you,

she could not live. I thought this was a mere momentary delusion of her own imagination, as it usually happens with such young girls, who are ready to die, forsooth, for the first smooth-faced lad who happens to look kindly upon them. But, in truth, my Madelon became seriously ill, and when I wanted to persuade her out of the foolish fancies that she had taken up, she only answered by repeating your name in a tone of distraction, about an hundred times over. What could I now do, unless I resolved to let her utterly despair? This would have been too harsh, and, yesterday morning, I said to her that I would grant my full and free consent, and that I would, if possible, bring you home with me to-day. So, in the course of one night, she is again become blooming like a rose in June, and now expects you with the utmost impatience."

"I heard no more ;—my senses were quite confused and lost, so that, Heaven forgive me, I know not how it happened, but ere long I found myself once more in the house of Cardillac. I heard Madelon's voice—'Olivier ! my own Olivier ! my beloved—my husband !' With these words she rushed into my arms ; and, with the most fervent rapture, I swore by the blessed Virgin and all the saints, that I would never forsake her.' "

Agitated even to tears by the recollection of that decisive moment, Olivier was obliged to pause in his narrative, while de Scuderi was confounded at hearing such imputations against one whom she had always looked upon as a model of regularity and integrity. "This is frightful," cried she ; "Rene Cardillac then belonged to that band of invisible miscreants, who have so long haunted our city, so that Paris might be called a mere den of murderers."

"Nay, nay," said Olivier ; "speak not of band, for there is not, and never was any such association. It was Cardillac alone, who, with diabolical activity, sought for and found his victims through the whole city. On his being *alone*, in the practices of these enormities, depended the security with which

he carried through his plans, and the unconquerable difficulty of tracing out the murderer. But let me proceed. What I have yet to add, will fully explain to you the mysteries in which this most unprincipled, and yet most unhappy of all mortals was involved."

CHAPTER VII.

"The situation in which I now found myself with Cardillac may be easily imagined. The decisive step was taken, and I could not retreat. Sometimes my gloomy imagination represented to me that I had become the assistant and accomplice of an assassin; only in my love for Madelon, I forgot at intervals the affliction that otherwise preyed on my spirits, and only in her presence was I able to conceal my feelings of abhorrence towards her father. If I joined with the old man in his professional labors, I could not bear to look on him, or to answer when he spoke to me, such was the indignation I felt against the vile hypocrite, who seemed to fulfil all the duties of an affectionate parent and good citizen, while the night veiled in its darkness his unparalleled iniquity. Madelon, pious, confiding, and innocent as an angel, looked up to him with unchanging love and affection! The thought often struck like a dagger to my heart, that if justice one day overtook the now masked and concealed assassin, this poor girl, so long deceived by his fiend-like cunning, would fall a victim to the most incurable despondency.

"Such apprehensions altogether prevented me from acting as I should otherwise have done, and even though I had been already condemned to the scaffold, I should have remained silent. Meanwhile I gained many hints from the conversation of the *marechaussee*, yet the motive of Cardillac's crimes, and the manner in which he carried them through, remained to me a complete riddle. The explanation, however, followed soon after.

"One day Cardillac, who generally excited my abhorrence

the more, because, when at work, he was, or pretended to be, cheerful and merry, appeared all of a sudden quite thoughtful and reserved. With a vehement start, he threw away an ornament on which he was then at work, so that the diamonds and pearls rolled about the floor, and exclaimed—‘Olivier, it is impossible that our intercourse can any longer be continued on this footing. Such a connection is to me quite intolerable. That which baffled all the cunning of Desgrais and his associates to discover, chance put it in your power at once to develop. You have beheld me at my nightly task, to which I am driven on by malignant stars,—by resistless destiny, against which I am unable to contend. It was indeed your evil star, too, that obliged you to follow me, with noiseless steps, and, as if invisible, so that I, who generally see objects in the dark, like a tiger, and hear the slightest noise, even to the humming of midges in the air, was never once aware of your presence. In short, it has become your fate in this world to be united with me, as my accomplice and companion ; and, as you are now situated in this house, there can be no thought on your part of treachery and betrayal. Therefore you may freely listen to all that I can reveal.’

“Never, never will I be thy accomplice, thou hypocritical old villain ! These words were at my tongue’s end, and I even tried to utter them, but the very horror and detestation which I felt towards Cardillac, rendered me inarticulate, so that I was able only to bring out some unintelligible sounds, which he might interpret in his own way. He now seated himself again on his working stool, and wiped his forehead, as if the conflict of his feelings had been more overpowering than the severest labor. He seemed fearfully moved by his recollections of the past, and with difficulty to regain any degree of self-possession ; but at last he resumed :—

“ ‘In the writings of natural philosophers,’ said he, ‘we read many strange stories of the wonderful impressions to which mothers are liable, and of the deep influences which such impressions, derived from outward causes, evince on their

children. I have not met with any story more marvellous, however, than one which has been told to me of my own mother. About two months after her marriage, she was admitted, along with other women, to be a looker-on at a brilliant festival given by our Court at Trianon. There her attention was so powerfully attracted by a certain cavalier, in a handsome Spanish dress, with a very magnificent chain, studded with diamonds, about his neck, that she could not turn her eyes from him for a moment. Her whole heart was fixed on these jewels, and she looked at them with a most ardent longing, convinced that they were a treasure of incalculable worth. The same cavalier had, some years before, when my mother was a young girl, paid his addresses to her, but was repulsed with indifference and disdain. My mother recognized him; but now, illumined as he was by the splendor of the brilliant diamonds, he seemed to her a being of a higher order, the very beau ideal of beauty and attraction. The cavalier did not fail to remark the fixed direction of her eyes, and the fervent admiration by which they seemed to be animated. He thought, of course, that she was now more favorably disposed towards him; he contrived to make his way to her party, entered into conversation, and, in the course of the evening, found means to entice her with him to a lonely thicket in the garden, quite apart from her associates. There an accident occurred, which, to this moment, remains inexplicable, unless on the supposition that my father was also present, and had been on the watch; but, during their interview, while the cavalier persisted in his amorous attentions, and my mother thought only of the beautiful chain, he was stabbed to the heart by some one who came behind him unawares, and who vanished instantly, favored by the darkness of the night. My mother's piercing shrieks brought people to her assistance, and the cavalier only lived long enough to declare that she was guiltless of his fate; but the horror and agitation of this adventure brought on a severe fit of illness, so that she and her unborn child were given up for lost.

However, she recovered, and her accouchement afterwards was more favorable than could have been expected, though the feelings inspired by that event acquired an influence over me, which could never afterwards be resisted. My evil star was now risen above the horizon, and had shot down those fatal rays which kindled in my heart one of the most extraordinary and destructive passions by which any poor mortal was ever misled and tormented.

‘Already, in my earliest childhood, glittering gems and gold chains were, above all things, the delight of my existence. This was looked on merely as an instance of that fondness for finery, which is common to all infants. But time proved that there was far more in the matter; for, when arrived at boyhood, I began to steal gold and jewels whenever I could lay my hands upon them. Like the most experienced connoisseur, I knew, by mere instinct, how to distinguish all sorts of real and precious jewelry from those which were counterfeited. And it was only by the genuine specimens that I was attracted. All imitations, and even gold coins, I left as unworthy of my notice. It was in vain that my father endeavored, by the most violent chastisements, to eradicate those propensities, which were inherent in my nature, and which, accordingly, grew with my growth, and strengthened with my strength.

‘Merely for the sake of getting, by fair means, such treasures into my hands, I resolved to become a goldsmith. I took lessons, and labored with passionate enthusiasm, till at length I surpassed all my instructors, and became a first-rate master in the art. I began business on my own account, and now there commenced a period in which my natural impulses, so long repressed, broke forth with such vehemence, that they soon got the better of every other consideration or propensity. No sooner had I delivered up any fine specimen of jewelry to the person by whom it had been ordered, than I fell into a state of disquietude, almost of despair, which was quite intolerable, and robbed me utterly of health and sleep. Like a ghost, the figure of the person for whom I had been working

stood day and night before me, adorned with my jewels, and a voice sounded ever and anon in my ears :—‘ Take it,—it is thine !—What business have the dead with these diamonds ? ’ At last the passion was irresistible—I betook myself regularly to the arts of thieving, and, having free access into the houses of the great, I profited by every opportunity. Of course, no lock resisted my ingenuity as a mechanic, and, in a short time, many of the ornaments that I had made were again in my own hands. But, afterwards, this was not sufficient to soothe the disquietude, or disperse the illusions by which I was tormented. That mysterious voice, of which I have already told you, was again audible, and cried to me many times, as if in scorn and mockery—‘ Ho—ho !—a dead man now wears your fine diamonds ! ’ It remained even to myself inexplicable, that against every one for whom I had provided brilliant zones, necklaces, and earrings, I entertained the most implacable hatred, till at last there arose in my mind a thirst after assassination, at which I myself, in the beginning, trembled and recoiled with horror.

‘ About that time I purchased the house in which we now live. I had concluded the bargain, and the landlord was seated with me in this very room, where we were making merry over a bottle of wine. It was late in the night, and I wished to retire, when my entertainer said, ‘ Listen, Monsieur Rene ; before you go, I must make you acquainted with a secret contrivance in this house, which is now yours. Look here ! ’—With these words, my landlord threw open a press in the wall, pushed aside the back pannels, which left an opening, through which we stepped into a small chamber, where he stepped down and lifted up a trap-door. We then descended a steep narrow staircase, and came to a small gateway, which he unlocked, and passed by it into the open square court. Here my landlord stepped up to the wall, pressed his fingers on a knob of iron, that was scarcely perceptible, and immediately a large stone began to move, so that one could enter by the opening which it had left, and pass through the

wall into the street. There is, besides, a concealed passage running through the wall, by which one may come to the statue, without entering the court; and these inventions were probably the work of the crafty Carthusian monks, of whose convent, in ancient times, this house formed a part. That which looks like a large stone is only a piece of wood, covered on the outside with rough paint, and properly colored to look like stone, into which there is fixed a statue, which is also of wood prepared in the same manner, and the whole turns together by means of concealed mechanism.

‘Dark forebodings, or, I should rather say, brilliant hopes, rose on my mind when I beheld these contrivances. It seemed as if they were exactly made for the fulfilment of deeds which were to myself yet a mystery, for I had never cherished any regular plan for street-robbery and assassination. My business was at this time rapidly increasing, and as I had just then delivered up to one of the court lords a rich ornament, which I knew was designed for a present to an opera-dancer, I was again assailed, but in a tenfold degree, by the same intolerable delusion which I had before experienced.—The ghost was inseparable wherever I went, and the diabolical voice was always whispering in my ears. At length I took possession of the house; and, on the first night, after I had gone to bed, it was impossible for me to obtain a moment’s repose. I tossed and tumbled on my restless couch, and, in my mind’s eye, beheld this man gliding through the streets with my box of jewels in his hand, to the opera-dancer’s lodgings. My rage at this sight became so ungovernable, that, about midnight, I started up, threw my mantle about my shoulders, went down by the secret staircase, and away through the wall into the *Rue de la Nicaise*. From thence I proceeded to the street in which the actress lived, where, as if sent by the devil, the man to whom I had sold the necklace soon afterwards fell in my way, and I directly attacked him. At first, he uttered a loud cry, but grasping him firmly by the throat, I struck the dagger right into his heart, so that he fell without another word, and the jewels were mine!

Having achieved this, I experienced a quiet and contentment of mind, such as I had never before known. The ghost had vanished, and the voice of the whispering devil was also mute. My contentment, indeed, lasted but for a brief interval, till I was called on again to make up and deliver an ornament of equal value ; but, by this very relief and composure of spirit, under circumstances which would have rendered any one else anxious and miserable, I recognized at once the fate that awaited me. My malignant stars were triumphant, and I must yield to them or die !—So, then,' concluded Cardillac, ' you are now possessed of the master-key to all the mysteries of my life and conduct. Do not suppose, because I am thus irresistibly led on from crime to crime, that I have absolutely renounced every feeling of humanity and compassion. You know already how unwilling I am to part with any jewels that I have made up ; how I keep them on one pretext or another from week to week ; besides, when I am applied to by persons, whose deaths it would be impossible for me to contemplate with indifference, it is an absolute rule of mine, that I will not accept of such employment. Nay, more, in many instances, I have avoided the crime of murder, for, with one blow of my clenched hand, I am able to stun my victims in such a manner, that they become altogether insensible ; and I can, without risk, possess myself at once of the jewels, which, alone, are my object.'

"After having thus spoken, Cardillac led me into a vaulted apartment, (entering from the press in his room-wall,) and allowed me to see his private collection of jewelry, than which the king himself could not display anything more magnificent. Every article had attached to it a parchment-ticket, on which there was inscribed for whom the ornament had been made, and at what time it had been regained, either by theft within doors, or street-robbery. ' On your wedding-day,' said Cardillac, in a deep stern voice, ' you will swear to me on the cross, a solemn oath, that, after my death, you will utterly annihilate all these diamonds and other jewels ! They must

be turned into dust, by a chemical process, with which I shall then make you acquainted. I am determined that no mortal, and least of all, Madelon, or you, should come into possession of treasures thus purchased by treachery and murder, lest, as I fear, a curse should attend on such an inheritance.'

"After these disclosures, I found myself lost in a labyrinth tenfold more intricate than ever. My situation might almost be compared to that of the already condemned sinner, who sees from afar a beneficent angel looking down with smiles upon him; but then Satan seizes him from below with his scorching talons, and the beautiful aspect of the seraph becomes to him the most cruel of his torments. I thought indeed of flight, nay, of self-murder. But then, what was to become of Madelon? You may indeed justly blame my conduct in this, that I was too weak to contend against a passion, which obliged me to conceal crimes, though I did not assist in their perpetration. But enough! The hour is near at hand, when I am to atone for this by an ignominious and untimely death on the scaffold.

"The rest of my story is soon told. One day it happened, that Cardillac came home wonderfully cheerful. He looked at me with the most friendly aspect; at dinner he indulged himself in a bottle of wine, such as I had never known him to use, except on high holidays; he even began to sing old songs,—in short, was rejoiced beyond measure. Madelon left us, and I would have retired into the work-room. 'Remain where you are, young man;' said Cardillac, 'to-day we are to have no more labor. Let us drink a glass together, to the health of the most noble, the most witty, and most excellent lady in all Paris.' When we had joined glasses to this toast, and he had emptied a full bumper, 'Olivier,' said he, 'how dost thou like these verses?'

"Un amant qui craint des voleurs,
N'est point digne d'amour."

After this question, he went on to relate what had happened at the apartments of the Duchess de Maintenon, when the

king requested your opinion of the petition that had been presented to him, for protection against the nightly assassins ; —adding, that ever since he had heard of that occurrence, he had cherished towards the lady de Scuderi the utmost respect, gratitude and veneration ; and that you were endowed with such pre-eminent virtue and talents, that, for the first time in his life, he felt an influence, which could overpower that of the malignant destiny to which he had been hitherto subjected. Nay, so much was he impressed with these sentiments, that if Mademoiselle de Scuderi were to bear on her person the finest ornaments he had ever made, the whispering demon of murder would never once tempt him to recover it. At last, ‘ Mark you, Olivier,’ said he, ‘ what I have now firmly resolved to do. A considerable time since, I received an order for a necklace and a pair of bracelets, from the Princess Henrietta of England. I was not limited to any fixed price, and succeeded in the work, even beyond my best expectations ; but my heart was almost broken, when I thought that I must part with these jewels, which, more than any that I had ever made up, had rivetted my affections. You know how that princess fell by the hands of an assassin. Of course the jewels remained unclaimed in my possession, and now, as a token of my veneration and gratitude, I shall present them as a gift from the supposed band of invisible robbers, to the lady de Scuderi. Besides that she will by this means receive a flattering proof of her triumphant influence over the King, I shall at the same time express my contempt for Desgrais, and his troop of catchpoles. You then, Olivier, shall be the bearer of this present to her ladyship’s house, and the sooner that she receives it the better.’

“ Even at the first mention of your name, it seemed as if a dark veil were drawn aside, and I beheld again in all their brightness and effulgence the delightful hopes and prospects of my youth. Cardillac perhaps observed the impression which his words had made on me, and interpreted it after his own manner. ‘ You appear,’ said he, ‘ to approve of my

intention ; and I can assure you, an inward voice, very different from that by which I was hitherto driven on like a furious beast of prey, from one crime to another, has now prompted me to this good action. Many times I am liable to strange moods of mind ;—these come over me almost like a warning from another world, the apprehension of some horrible and yet unknown event, which seizes me so powerfully, that I cannot shake it off. At such times, it appears to me as if those deeds in which I was but the agent of a malignant and irresistible destiny, might be reckoned against my own immortal soul, though, in truth, that bears no share of the guilt. In a state of mind like this, I once resolved to prepare a beautiful diamond crown, for the blessed Virgin in the church of St. Eustathius. But, instead of deriving comfort from this design, I felt always more and more that indescribable terror and perturbation stealing over me, and though I frequently began the work, I could not persevere, but was at last obliged to give it up altogether. Now, it appears to me, almost, as if with an humble and contrite heart, I were to bring an offering to the shrine of virtue and piety, and that I shall obtain the mediation of a saint in my favor, if I send to de Scuderi the finest ornament that I have ever elaborated.’—Cardillac, who was well acquainted with your mode of life, now informed me at what hour, and in what manner, I was to deliver the jewels, which I immediately received from him enclosed in an elegant case. My feelings were now quite elated, and even rapturous ; for I thought that Providence had pointed out to me, even through the wicked Cardillac, a means of escaping from that horrid thralldom and abject slavery under which I had so long suffered. Such were my private thoughts, and quite against Cardillac’s plans and wishes, I determined that I would make my way to your presence. As the son of Anne Brusson, and your former protégé, I thought of throwing myself at your feet, and revealing to you all that had happened, well knowing that, from your goodness of heart, you would, on Madelon’s account, have preserved invi-

olate the secrets thus disclosed. Even without the necessity of publishing his guilt to the world, I was impressed with the belief that your powerful mind would have devised some means to stop his frightful career, and to liberate Madelon and myself from his tyranny ; though, what means could be taken, my mind was too confused even to conjecture. Still I had the most implicit confidence that you could assist us. It is needless to repeat how my plans that night were frustrated ; though I tried every means that I thought could force Martiniere to admit me into your presence ; but I did not give up hopes of finding a better opportunity.

“All of a sudden, however, Cardillac seemed entirely to have lost the cheerfulness and good humor which he had lately assumed. He went about from room to room, silent and gloomy, with his eyes staring on vacancy ; threw out his arms as if demons and spectres were actually assailing him ; and it was obvious that his mind was beset with some wicked temptations. One morning, in particular, he had continued for hours together in this disordered mood ; at length he seated himself at his work-table, as if he would begin the usual task of the day—but had no sooner taken his place than he started up again and exclaimed, in a deep hollow tone, ‘ I wish from my heart that Henrietta of England had lived to wear my jewels ! ’ These words inspired me with the utmost horror ; for I well knew that his mind was laboring under the same influence which had led him into his former crimes, and that the voice of Satan was again audible in his ears. I saw your life threatened by the reckless assassin, but at the same time was perfectly aware that if he only had the jewels again in his hands, you might be spared. Cardillac watched me so narrowly, that I durst scarcely be a moment out of his sight : however, I had intended, at all risks, to go to your house, when one morning I luckily met you on the *Pont Neuf*, forced my way to your carriage, and threw into it that billet, which I had, ready written, and in which I conjured you to give back the casket into Cardillac’s hands. You never

came nor sent to his house, and my fears increased almost to madness, when, on the following day, Cardillac could speak of nothing else but certain magnificent jewels, finer than any that the world had yet beheld, and which had been constantly present to his mind's eye during the night. I had no doubt that he alluded to your necklace and bracelets; it was at all events certain that his imagination was fixed on some plan of murder, which, in all probability, he would try to execute on the very same night—and I determined to protect you at all risks, though it should cost the life of Cardillac. Therefore, when he had as usual read the vesper service, and shut himself up in his bed-room, I made my way through a window into the court, passed through the secret opening at the statue, and took my station at a little distance, keeping as much as possible in the shadow. No long interval had elapsed, when Cardillac came out, and walked with his usual light, cautious steps along the street. Just as on the night when I first discovered his guilt, I now went after him, and my heart beat violently, when I found that he was taking the route towards the *Rue St. Honoree*. We arrived there accordingly, and all at once he disappeared. I could not find out his station this time, and was at a loss what to do. I thought of planting myself at your door as a sentinel, but, precisely as on the former occasion, there came up an officer gaily dressed, whistling and singing, who went past without observing me. Almost in the same moment, the dark figure of the diabolical Cardillac started forward, and being determined, if possible, to prevent this murder, I rushed up just as they grappled together. Short as the distance was, I came again too late; but this time the result was different; it was not the officer, but Cardillac, who fell motionless, and without a word, to the ground!—The former let fall the dagger, which he was still grasping when I came up, drew his sword, and took his position on the defensive, believing no doubt that I was an accomplice of the murderer; but perceiving that I interested myself only for his fallen victim, he turned round, and with-

out speaking, hastened away. Cardillac was still living, and, with infinite labor and exertion, I contrived to bear him home on my shoulders, and convey him by the secret passage into his own workshop.

"The rest is already known to you, and requires no farther notice. You perceive that my only guilt consisted in my not having had sufficient firmness and resolution to betray Madelon's father to the officers of justice, and thus put an end at once to his assassinations. In other respects I am wholly blameless ; but no torture would force from me the disclosure of his guilt, by which alone I could be cleared in the eye of the law. It has hitherto been the merciful will of Providence that the horrid truth should be withheld from Madelon ; therefore I shall never, in order to save my own life, withdraw the veil by which her father's real character has been concealed.

"Could I endure the thought that she should behold the remains of a parent, whom she so long loved and respected, dragged from the tomb, and branded in the *Place de Greve*, by the public executioner?—No ! my dearest Madelon will weep for me as one who died innocent, and time will alleviate her sorrow ; but, were she at once to learn the whole truth, the shock would be so unsupportable, that madness, perhaps, would ensue—at all events, she could never, in this world, be restored to peace of mind."

Olivier here broke off abruptly, and burst into tears. He throw himself at de Scuderi's feet, and implored her compassion. "You are convinced of my innocence," said he ; "I know it must be so ! Have pity, then, on my sufferings, and tell me how is Madelon !" De Scuderi made no answer, but rang for Martiniere, and in the next moment, Madelon was in her lover's arms. "Now, all is well again," she exclaimed, "for you are here ! I was, indeed, sure that this noble minded lady would find means to set you at liberty !" Over and over again were such expressions of joy and confidence repeated by the poor girl, while Olivier too, appeared for the time perfectly happy, forgetting his own real situation, and

the cruel fate that awaited him. Thereafter, both described in the most moving terms the sufferings which they had mutually endured ; again they embraced, and shed tears of rapture, to find themselves once more united. Even if de Seuderi had not been already convinced of Brusson's innocence, that scene must have established her belief beyond a doubt. "No!" said she to herself, "whatever la Regnie may maintain to the contrary, they are not criminal. It could only be hearts that are wholly free from the torments of a guilty conscience, that thus, in the delights of a mutual attachment, forget the world, with all its miseries and misfortunes."

The first rays of the morning light now broke through the window. Desgrais knocked gently at the door of the room, and reminded them that it was time for Brusson's removal, as at a later hour this could not be done without attracting attention. The lovers were therefore obliged to separate, and their parting was such, that even the sternest heart could not have contemplated the scene without emotion.

CHAPTER VIII.

Satisfied as de Seuderi was of Brusson's innocence, her gloomy anticipations of his approaching fate returned in all their force after his departure—and, with heartfelt grief, she beheld the son of her beloved Anne Guiot involved in such inexplicable toils, that to save him seemed next to impossible. She admired the heroic courage of the youth who would rather die loaded with unjust imputations, than betray a secret, which, as he thought, would, more certainly than his own fate, bring distraction and despair on the object of his affection. Under these circumstances, she could not, within the utmost limits of probability, find any means by which he could escape the cruel sentence that would be passed against him ; yet she must not hesitate to make every exertion, or sacrifice, if it were possible that such a horrid act of in-

justice might be prevented. She therefore kept her mind on the rack with a hundred different schemes, some of which were sufficiently romantic and extravagant, and all were at length set aside as impracticable. The rays of hope became always fainter and fainter, so that she would have given up the point in despair, had it not been that Madelon's boundless and child-like confidence in her protectress, and the rapture with which she spoke of her lover, who would now, as she thought, be pronounced free from every charge against him, kept her sympathy awake, and her attention on the stretch, though, all the while, she felt wounded to the heart by the consciousness of her own inability to realize these expectations.

In order that something, at least, might be tried, de Scuderi wrote a long letter to la Regnie, in which she informed him, that Brusson had, in the most convincing manner, proved to her his innocence of Cardillac's murder; and that it was only his heroic resolution, of carrying with him to the grave a secret, which, if revealed, might be the cause of grief and despondency to another, who is wholly blameless, that had prevented him, at his trial, from making a confession, such as would at once have freed him from all suspicion. In writing this letter, whatever could be effected by the most zealous eloquence, and ingenious argument, was put in force by de Scuderi, in order to soften the heart of la Regnie; but, after an interval of only half an hour, came his implacable answer, stating that he was very glad to learn that Brusson had justified himself so completely in the opinion of his noble and benevolent protectress; but, as to the young man's heroic resolution, of carrying with him a secret to the grave, he regretted that, in a case of this kind, where a criminal had been regularly committed, he could not approve of such heroism; on the contrary, the *Chambre Ardente* would doubtless employ the strongest means in their power to break through that obstacle, and in a few days he hoped to be in possession of this terrible secret, which would, no doubt, bring wonders to light.

De Scuderi knew but too well to what means the frightful

la Regnie alluded, and by which he trusted to break the resolution of the prisoner. It was now certain that the unfortunate youth would be put to the torture, which measure her letter, however well intended, would now rather tend to accelerate than retard. In the most miserable agitation, de Scuderi bethought herself, that, in order even to obtain a short delay, the assistance of a lawyer would be requisite. At that time, Pierre Arnaud d'Andilly was the most renowned advocate in Paris ; and his deep knowledge of his professional duties was only to be excelled by his unimpeachable honesty, and severe virtue.

De Scuderi, therefore, went to his house immediately, and explained the situation in which Brusson was placed, as far as it was possible to do so without openly betraying Cardillac's guilt. She had supposed that the advocate would, with great zeal, undertake the cause of the unhappy youth, but in such expectations found herself bitterly disappointed. D'Andilly listened quietly to all that she could say, and then answered in the words of Boileau,—“*Le vrai peut quelquefois n'être pas vrai-semblable.*” He then demonstrated to de Scuderi, that there was against Brusson the strongest grounds of suspicion, and that the proceedings of la Regnie were by no means to be called rash and cruel ; but, on the contrary, were quite according to law, and, indeed, he durst not act otherwise without infringing his duties as a judge. For his own part, he did not perceive how, by the cleverest defence which any advocate could make, Brusson could be saved from the torture. It was only the young man himself who could bring about this, either by a confession of his guilt ; or, if he really were innocent, by a minute detail of the real circumstances which led to the death of Cardillac, and thus perhaps afford some grounds on which he might be defended. “Then,” said de Scuderi, in a faltering voice, and bursting into tears, “I shall throw myself at the king's feet—and implore him for mercy !” “For heaven's sake, my lady,” cried d'Andilly, do not try this on the present occasion. Reserve the *dernier resort*,

which if it should fail you in one instance, is, of course, lost to you forever. The king will never show favor to a criminal of this class; for, by so doing, he would, of necessity, draw on himself the bitterest hatred of the people, who feel themselves every night in danger of their lives, if they venture abroad. It is possible that Brusson himself may change his mind, and, by a full or partial confession, will find means of moving the judges in his favor."

De Scuderi found herself obliged to submit to the opinion of the learned advocate, and returned home in very low spirits. She was unable to divert her attention from the subject, and was sitting alone in her chamber at a late hour of the night, imploring one by one all the saints in the Calendar, that they would assist her invention with some device to save the unhappy youth, when Martinieri entered, and announced a visit from the Count de Miossen. This nobleman was well known at court, as colonel of the king's *Garde d'Honneur*, and having earnestly requested an audience of the lady de Scuderi, was, of course, admitted.

"Forgive me, Mademoiselle," said the Count, bowing with military grace and politeness, "if I thus trouble you at an inconvenient hour. We soldiers have not the time at our command; and besides, a few words will plead my apology. It is on account of your protege, Olivier Brusson, that I have come hither."

"Olivier Brusson!" said de Scuderi, with her attention on the utmost stretch, "what can you have to say of that most unfortunate of mortals?" "I thought, indeed," said de Miossen with a smile, "that the name of that youth would procure me a favorable hearing, for though all the world has been convinced of his guilt, I am aware that you hold a different opinion, which is said to depend on the prisoner's own assertions. With me the case is altogether different, and no one can be more perfectly certain than I am, (not even Brusson himself,) that he is perfectly guiltless as to the death of Cardillac." "Good heaven! my lord Count," said de Scuderi,

her eyes sparkling with joy, "how have you obtained such information? Speak on, I entreat you." "My answer need only be in three words," said de Miossen, with emphasis; "*it was I*—I myself who struck the old goldsmith a mortal blow in the *Rue St. Honoree*, not far from your house."

"The saints protect us!" cried de Scuderi; "*You?—you* indeed! it is impossible." "Nay," said de Miossen; "I swear to you that, so far from looking on that action as a crime, I believe that I have thereby rendered an especial service to the whole city of Paris, and that I deserve the thanks of every one of its inhabitants. I can assure you, Mademoiselle, that Cardillac was the most depraved and hypocritical of villains, and that it was he alone who committed the horrid murders and robberies, escaping, as if by miracle, all the snares that were laid for him. I scarcely know myself by what means my own suspicions against the old miscreant were first awoke, but when I heard of his eccentricities, as they were called, I always supposed that there was something wrong in his character. However, it so happened that he once came to me in visible inquietude and perturbation, with a set of jewels which I had ordered, and on receiving payment, he begged to know for whom I designed the present? I returned him a careless and indignant answer; but afterwards, in the most artful manner, he contrived to elicit from my confidential servant at what hour I was in the habit of visiting a certain lady. It had before occurred to me, as something very remarkable, that the victims of assassination who were daily found in the streets, had all precisely the same sort of wound, apparently inflicted by one and the same weapon. I was quite certain that the murderer must have been, by practice, accustomed to the blow, which was momentarily mortal, and must have reckoned with certainty on its effect. If that *one* blow should prove ineffectual, then there might be a combat on an equal footing. This made me think of a precaution, in its nature so simple, that I am surprised it did not occur to others who could not have gone out at night without

being apprehensive of the danger that awaited them. In short, I put on a light coat of mail under my waistcoat, and walked along the street at that hour which, as my servant had informed him, was the usual time of my nightly assignations. When I was drawing near to the lady's house, Cardillac, just as I had expected, rushed up, and attacked me from behind. He clasped me in his arms with gigantic strength; but the blow which he aimed, trusting as usual that it would prove mortal, slid off from the coat of mail without doing me any injury. At that moment I disengaged myself from his hold, and having my stiletto ready in my right hand, struck it into his heart."

"And you have been silent," said de Scuderi, "and would not announce these important truths to the *Chambre Ardente*?" "I have been silent," answered Miossen, "and your ladyship will please to remember, that such information, if it did not bring destruction upon my own head, must, at least, have involved me in a terrible law process. Would la Regnie, who suspects every one who falls in his way, of guilt and hypocrisy, have believed me if I accused Cardillac, (who was looked upon as a perfect model of regularity and devotion,) of an attempt at murder?—Should I not rather, by this means, have turned the sword of justice against myself?" "Impossible," said de Scuderi, "your birth and rank must have preserved you from such imputations." "Oh, ho!" replied de Miossen, "your ladyship forgets, then, the Marshal de Luxembourg, who, because he had once taken it into his head to have his fortune read by le Sage, brought on himself the suspicion of wishing to poison all his acquaintances, and was therefore thrown into the Bastille. No,—by St. Dennis! I would not surrender even a single hour of my personal liberty into the power of la Regnie. I doubt not, that, if the matter were at his own disposal, he would bring all our necks to the block, *tout d'un coup*, without delay or discrimination."

"But whatever is the character of la Regnie," said de Scuderi, "could you have made up your mind on such prin-

ciples, to see the guiltless Brusson dragged to the scaffold ? ” “ Guiltless ? ” said de Miossen ; “ could you then apply that epithet to the friend and accomplice of the diabolical Cardillac ? To him, forsooth, who, no doubt, aided the assassin in all his crimes, and who has, therefore, deserved an hundred-fold the punishment that now awaits him ?—No, indeed ! He will justly suffer on the scaffold ; nor was it from any wish to rescue him that I made these disclosures ;—yet, at the same time, if you can turn what I have said to the advantage of your protege,—if, at least, means could be devised to save him from the torture, I should rejoice, as I know that this would be a satisfaction to your benevolent heart.”

De Scuderi, overjoyed to find her own conviction of Olivier’s innocence thus confirmed, did not hesitate to repeat to the Count the whole narrative, which the unfortunate youth had entrusted to her, and to suggest, that they ought immediately to go to the advocate D’Andilly. From him she proposed that a solemn promise of secrecy should be required, and that they should afterwards be governed by his counsel as to what remained farther to be done.

The meeting took place accordingly, and the advocate was very particular in his enquiries of de Miossen, whether he was absolutely certain that it was Cardillac, by whom he had been attacked, and if he could swear to the personal identity of Brusson, as the individual who had come up during their encounter. “ Not only,” said the Count, “ did I recognize the goldsmith’s features by the moonlight, but I have also seen, in the hands of la Regnie, the dagger with which Cardillac was struck. I can swear to its being mine, and it is distinguished from all others, by the particular workmanship of the hilt. As to the young man’s countenance, his hat had fallen off, and I was so near to him that I could recognize his appearance again, even among a thousand people.”

The advocate was silent for some minutes, and fixed his eyes thoughtfully on the ground. At length he said, “ In an ordinary and regular way, Brusson cannot possibly be res-

cued from the sentence that awaits him. On account of his attachment to Madelon, he will not accuse Cardillac as an assassin. But this course he might follow, at all events, because, if by an exposure of the secret passage, and the collected treasures, he were to prove the goldsmith's guilt, he would not the less be looked on as an accomplice. The same difficulties, of course, remain, though the Count de Miossen were to reveal his adventures to the judge. Delay is, in short, the only advantage we can hope for at present, and, in order to obtain this, we must not speculate, but use, at once, the means, however limited, that are within our power. With this view, Count de Miossen may, if he pleases, go to the *Conciergerie*, may have an interview with the prisoner, and identify him as the person who came up to the assistance of Cardillac. He may then go to la Regnie, and say, "I was walking in the *Rue St. Honoree*, and saw a man knocked down. I ran to give my assistance, when another man started out from the opposite side of the street, came up, and kneeled beside him who had fallen, and as he found life not extinct, took him up on his shoulders and carried him away. This person's features were clearly visible to me in the moonlight, and I have recognized them in Olivier Brusson." Should the Count think proper to give in a deposition of this tenor, it will, of course, bring on a new hearing in court, and the deponent will be examined along with the prisoner. At all events, it is satisfactory that the torture will be for the present postponed, and farther investigations will be commenced.—Then will be the proper time to make an application to the king,—and this last must, of course, be entrusted to the management of the lady de Scuderi, on whose good sense and admirable talents success with his majesty must depend. In my opinion it would be proper to reveal to him the whole mystery. Brusson's confessions to you are fully supported by the deposition of the Count, and farther proof will probably be gained by an examination of Cardillac's house. All this, however, could not warrant any favorable sentence of the

law ; but it may justify the interference of the king, who can show mercy even in cases where the judge is necessitated to condemn the prisoner."

D'Andilly's advice was accurately followed, and the consequences were such as he had expected, the torture being delayed, and a day appointed for a new hearing. Now the proper time had arrived for having recourse to the king ; a point on which de Scuderi could not help feeling timid and anxious ; for such was the abhorrence that Louis had conceived against Brusson, believing him to be one of the murderers by whom all Paris was kept in a state of terror and agitation, that, even on the slightest allusion to the delays that had taken place at the trial, he fell into a tremendous passion. The Marchioness de Maintenon, adhering firmly to her principles of never speaking to the monarch upon any subject that was disagreeable, refused to undertake the office of mediatrix, so that Brusson's fate was left entirely in the hands of de Scuderi. After long reflection, she came to a resolution which she did not lose a moment in carrying into effect ; she dressed herself for the occasion, in a black robe of heavy massive silk, adorned herself with Cardillac's fine jewels, hung a lace veil over the whole, and in this attire made her *entree* into the chambers of de Maintenon, at the time when the king was there. In such a dress, the dignified figure, and placid countenance of the noble poetess, failed not to inspire respect, even among the mob of idle loungers, who, as usual, were collected in the ante-room. All made way for her with the greatest deference, and on her appearance in the audience chamber, even the king himself was forcibly struck, and came forward to meet her.

The valuable diamonds of the necklace and bracelets then flashed so brightly, that they could not escape his notice, and he exclaimed, by St. Dennis, that is jewelry of Cardillac's.—Look only, Madame la Marquise," added he, turning to de Maintenon, " how our beautiful bride mourns for the loss of her betrothed husband !"—" Nay, Sire," answered de Scu-

deri in the same tone of *badinage*, "how could it become a mourning bride to adorn herself with these glittering jewels? No—no! I have quite disengaged my affections from the goldsmith, and would not think of him any more, were it not indeed that his frightful figure, as he lay murdered, and was carried close by me, so often recurs to my recollection."—"How is this?" said the king; "you saw Cardillac then on the night of the murder?" De Scuderi now related in few words, how chance (for she did not venture to speak of Brusson,) had brought her to the goldsmith's house, just after the alarm of his death had been given. She described the wild grief of Madelon, the deep impression that had been made on her own mind by the appearance and conduct of the beautiful girl; in consequence of which she had rescued her from the violent hands of Desgrais, and brought her away, followed by the loud applause of the multitude. De Scuderi's tones were clear and musical, and her eloquence was powerful.—She contrived always to give additional interest to the narrative, and perceiving that Louis was favorably disposed, she came to the scenes with la Regnie, with Desgrais, and at length even with Olivier Brusson. The king had indeed listened attentively to de Scuderi's story, insomuch that he seemed to have quite forgot the irritability and anger which he had before manifested, whenever any allusion was made to that criminal. He never once checked the lady's discourse, but occasionally, by his interjections of surprise or approval, betrayed how deeply he was interested. Before Louis was in the least aware of her intentions, and while he was under the full impression of her eloquence, de Scuderi had thrown herself at his feet, and implored his royal clemency in behalf of the unfortunate prisoner.

"What can all this mean, Mademoiselle?" cried the king, raising her up by both hands, and leading her to a chair.—"You surprise me beyond measure. What you have now related is indeed a very strange and affecting story, but who can tell whether Brusson's confessions are really true, or mere

inventions of his own brain?" To this de Scuderi answered by referring to the deposition of Count de Miossen,—the examination of Cardillac's house,—her own inward conviction,—the perfect innocence and goodness of heart shown by Madelon, who could not have loved Brusson so ardently if he had not also been guiltless. The king seemed much struck by the earnest confidence of her manner, and was about to answer, but at that moment Louvois the secretary, who had been at work in an adjoining room, looked in with an anxious countenance, and Louis, seeming to understand the signal, immediately retired. De Scuderi and de Maintenon immediately glanced at each other, and thought that by this interruption all was lost; for Louis, having had time to recover from his first surprise, would doubtless take good care not to be so much moved a second time. However, after a few minutes, the *grand monarque* came again into the room, took two or three turns up and down, then placed himself, with his arms crossed, opposite to de Scuderi, and said, rather in a low voice, without looking directly at her, "I should like for once to see your protégé, Madelon!" "Oh, my gracious liege!" said de Scuderi, "what unspeakable condescension do you vouchsafe towards that poor girl, and what happiness will you confer upon her! It only requires your Majesty's approving signal in order to see the poor child even now at your feet."

The king nodded in token of acquiescence, and de Scuderi tripped away, as fast as her heavy dress would permit her, to inform the attendants at the door that his Majesty desired to see Madelon Cardillac in the audience chamber. On her return she could not help bursting into tears, and sobbed aloud, so deeply was she affected. She had, indeed, fondly anticipated that the king's attention might be gained, and had, with this view, brought Madelon along with her, who was now waiting in one of the ante-rooms, with the *dame d'Honneur* of the Marquis, and holding in her hand a little petition, which had been drawn out for her by D'Andilly.

In a few moments she made her *entree*, and threw herself in silence at the king's feet. Agitated at once by fear, bashfulness, grief, and love, her heart beat so violently, that she could not have uttered a word. Her cheeks were suffused with the deepest blushes, and her eyes shone through tears, that ever and anon fell through her long eyelashes, on her snow-white bosom. It was obvious, that, from the first moment, the king was deeply struck with the wonderful beauty of this angelic girl. He raised her gently from the ground, and even made a movement as if he would kiss the hand which he still held; he let it go, however, but looked at her with an expression of embarrassment, that betrayed how deeply he was affected. The Marchioness de Maintenon now whispered to de Scuderi, "Is not her hair wonderfully like that of la Valiere? The king, too, seems to think so, and luxuriates in sweet though melancholy remembrances; your game is won!" Cautiously as de Maintenon pronounced these words, yet in the stillness of the whole party, the king had probably overheard them. He turned half round to the Marquise, and a transient flush of displeasure came over his features. He then read the short petition which Madelon had brought with her, and said mildly and good humoredly, "I believe, indeed, my dear child, that you are thoroughly convinced of your lover's innocence, but we must yet hear what the *Chambre Ardente* have to say on that head." A wave of his hand implied that the poor girl might withdraw; and, as she retired, it was remarked that she could not help bursting into a passionate flood of tears.

De Scuderi perceived, to her great dismay, that the recollection of la Valiere, beneficial as it might have been at first, yet, as soon as de Maintenon pronounced the name of that lady, seemed to have quite a contrary effect. It might be that Louis found himself by this means rather *brusquement* reminded, that he was about to sacrifice justice at the shrine of beauty, or he might feel like a dreamer, who, when suddenly awoke, sees the beautiful images that he had thought to grasp,

fade at once into chill reality. Now, perhaps, he no longer beheld the young and blooming la Valiere, but only the sister Louise de la Misericorde, (which was her name among the Carmelite nuns,) who, with her piety and penitence, was by no means an object suited to the lively disposition of the monarch. What could henceforth be done to retrieve this blunder? It was a subject on which she dared not to speak, and she could only wait in patience the king's unbiassed determination.

The deposition of the Count de Miossen before the *Chambre Ardente* had now been made known in public, and as it usually happens with the mob, who fly from one extreme to another, the very same individual, who had before been denounced as the most abominable of hypocrites and assassins, and whom they had threatened to tear in pieces, if he were not immediately brought to the scaffold, was now mourned and lamented over as the innocent victim of a barbarous and unrelenting judge. Now, for the first time, the neighbors began to recollect with what exemplary piety he had always conducted himself among them, his regular attendance at church, and the faithful industry with which he had served the old goldsmith. Nay, great bands of people often assembled in a threatening manner before the house of la Regnie and shouted aloud, "We come to demand freedom for Olivier Brusson—bring him out to us immediately, for he is innocent!" At last they began to throw stones at the windows; so that la Regnie was obliged to send to the *Marechaussee* for protection.

Several days passed over, and de Scuderi had not received any intimation how the process was going on. Quite restless and miserable, she at last betook herself to de Maintenon, who assured her that the king had never said one word on the subject, and that it would be by no means prudent to remind him of it. Afterwards, when she inquired with an ironical smile for the little la Valiere, de Scuderi was convinced that, in this proud woman's heart, there existed some feeling of

jealousy or vexation, by which the king might easily be led astray from all his good intentions. From de Maintenon, therefore, she could not for the future entertain any hopes of assistance.

At last, with the help of D'Andilly, she was able to discover, that Louis had had a conference with the Count de Miossen ; farther, that Bontems, the monarch's confidential chamberlain, had been sent to the *Conciergerie*, and had spoken with Brusson ; afterwards, that private examinations had been carried on at the house of Cardillac, where the old gentleman Claude Patru deposed, that, through the whole night on which Cardillac was murdered, he had heard an extraordinary noise over his head, and that Olivier must certainly have been there, for he had distinctly heard his voice, &c. So much at least was certain, that the king had ordered the most accurate inquiries to be made into the evidence for and against Brusson ; but it was inconceivable how the matter was so long of coming to any termination. La Regnie would no doubt try every method to hold fast within his own power the victim who thus threatened to escape from him ; and, when de Scuderi reflected on this man's character, she almost lost hope. Nearly a month had passed away, when a message was brought to the lady, that the king wished to see her, the same evening, at the chambers of de Maintenon. De Scuderi's heart beat violently, for she knew that Brusson's trial must by this time be decided. She mentioned this to the poor Madelon, who prayed zealously to the blessed Virgin and all the saints, that whatever the judge's sentence might have been, the king at least might be inspired with a conviction of her lover's innocence.

For some time, however, after de Scuderi's appearance in the Marchioness's rooms, his Majesty seemed to have forgotten the whole affair, for, as on former occasions, occupying himself in lively discourse with the ladies, he did not allude, by a single syllable, to the unhappy prisoner. At last, however, Bontems appeared, went up to the monarch, and said a few

words in a voice so low, that their import was unintelligible to the bystanders, though, as the name Brusson was audible, de Scuderi trembled, but she was not long kept in suspense. Louis arose, and came to her with joy unaffectedly gleaming in his eyes, "I congratulate you, Mademoiselle," said he, "your protégé, Olivier Brusson, is free!" De Scuderi, who was too much affected to utter a word, would have thrown herself at his feet in her gratitude,—but Louis prevented her. "No, no! my lady," said he, "I have not deserved such homage, for it is to your exertions that this result is owing. You should, in truth, be my advocate in the chamber of peers, and carry on all my pleas, for there is no resisting your eloquence. Yet," added he, in a more serious tone, "whoever is under the protection of genius and virtue, may indeed be safe, in spite of the *Chambre Ardente*, and all the courts of justice in the world." De Scuderi now found words, and in the most glowing terms expressed her gratitude. The king interrupted this, reminding her that far more ardent thanks now awaited her in her own house than he had any right to look for, as by that time Madelon was probably clasped in the embraces of her fortunate lover. "Bontems," concluded the monarch, "shall disburse one thousand *Louis d'or*, which I beg of you to give in my name to the poor girl, as a wedding dowry. She may marry this Olivier Brusson, who, whether innocent or guilty, is probably far from deserving such good fortune; but, then, both of them must leave Paris. That is our fixed will and resolve, from which we shall certainly not depart."

On de Scuderi's return home, Martiniere came in a great hurry to the door, and behind her was Baptiste, both of them with looks of the utmost delight, and exclaiming, "He is free—he is free!—oh! the dear happy young bride and bridegroom!" The lovers now threw themselves at de Scuderi's feet—"Oh! I knew very well, that you,—you alone would save my beloved husband!" cried Madelon. "And my confidence in the kind protectress of my infancy," said Olivier,

"was never for a moment abated." They kissed the hands of the venerable lady, declaring that the happiness of that moment far more than compensated for all their sufferings; then they wept in their great joy, and vowed that nothing but death should again effect their separation.

After a few days, they were united by the holy rites of the church, and even, though it had not been the king's command, Brusson would not have remained in Paris, where all the scenes reminded him of Cardillac's crimes, and where a trifling chance might bring to light the horrid mysteries which were already known to several individuals. Immediately after his wedding, therefore, he went, followed by the blessings of de Scuderi, to Geneva, where being well established in the world by Madelon's dowry, and clever in his profession, he led henceforward a contented happy life, free from care and vexation of every kind, so that for him all those hopes were realized, in which his father had even to his dying day been disappointed.

About a year after Brusson's departure, a public advertisement appeared at Paris, signed by Harley, de Chavelon, archbishop, and the advocate Pierre Arnaud D'Andilly, to the effect, that a repentant sinner under the zeal of confession, had given over to the church a treasure of gold and diamonds which he had gained by robbery. Every person, therefore, who, from about the end of 1680, had been robbed of property on the streets, should come to the chambers of D'Andilly, where, if their description of what they had lost accorded exactly with that of any jewel in his possession, they would immediately obtain it again. Many, therefore, who were noted in Cardillac's list as not murdered, but only stunned by a blow of his powerful arm, came one after another to the advocate, and, to their no small astonishment, received back the jewels. The rest were given up as a present to the church of St. Eustathius.

THE PHARO BANK.

Spekulation Glück
Serapion - brüder III. Teil, Kempten
ed. vol. III CHAPTER I. *p. 236 ff*

Prymont, during the summer of 18—, was frequented more than ever by foreign visitors, who have gold in abundance, and the time to spend it. It was a good year for speculators of all kinds who seek their fortunes in the pockets of others. The bankers at games of chance, to better attract the new guests whom they counted upon plucking, had secretly raised their batteries, and the green cloths were astonished at the piles of ducats which sparkled in the light of the wax candles to tempt the cupidity of barons of all countries. The bathing season adds new activity every year to the gambling houses, a power of attraction which is irresistible. There are some people who, during the whole year have not touched a card, and who pass hours and days there around the table like professed gamblers. The fashion requires besides this that all the people who follow it should know how to lose a few pieces of gold gracefully every evening. Nevertheless, this irresistible charm had not been able to seduce a young gentleman baron whom we shall call Siegfried. Instead of following the general rule, our friend preferred long evening walks amid the picturesque views of the country; often he remained shut up in his room, occupying his melancholy leisure with reading or meditations which it would have been difficult for the most cunning to guess the secret of.

Our hero was young, handsome and well put together, rich and of romantic stock, as are nearly all the heroes of romance. There was related concerning him a thousand gallant adventures from which he came off crowned with honor : and the old people who had known him from his birth were never tired of repeating, amongst others, the following story :

Siegfried, before arriving at an age when the law gave him full disposition of his property, found himself once on a time, travelling over hills and through valleys, like a son of noble family, but with such lack of funds, that, to pay his bill at the inn, he was forced to try and sell his gold watch garnished with precious stones. But, instead of having to make this bargain with some thieving and miserly Jew, he met a young lord, who having long desired to possess a watch of this description, bought it without hesitation. One year afterwards, Siegfried read in a gazette of a watch to be put up in a lottery ; he took a ticket and won ; this watch was the one that he had sold. A little while afterwards he exchanged it for a ring that he fancied. Shortly after this he entered the service of Prince G——, as private secretary, and the first present that his highness offered him was again the same watch set with precious stones, and accompanied, this time, by a chain which greatly enhanced its value. I know not how it was that in relating this anecdote the strong dislike that Siegfried manifested towards all games of chance was always spoken of, and many concluded from this that the fine nobleman was miserly to the last degree. There was in this calumny sufficient show of reason to pique his self-esteem. So to give a forcible denial to this slander, he went into the pharo bank, with the determination to play and lose all his money. But fortune was in his favor, and continued so obstinately faithful to him, that in spite of the boldest risks, with the least calculation, he won considerable sums ; and at each stake that he pocketed, great was the surprise of the players at seeing the spite which he appeared to feel towards his great luck. The result of this was, that all those who had at first proclaimed

him a miser agreed in saying that he was mad. The inexplicable continuance of his luck made him contract the habit, and soon after the passion for play. He became in a short time infatuated.

One evening, as the banker had just finished dealing, Seigfried, on raising his eyes, saw a middle aged man opposite, who fixed upon him a cold and serious look ; the impression of this look became stronger every time our hero ceased to follow the game ; the eye of the unknown was always there, wild and penetrating as a dagger.

This strange personage did not leave his place to go out of the room, until all of the gold on the table had disappeared.

The following day he came and seated himself in the same place, and fixed the same look upon Seigfried. It was a diabolical fascination from which the young baron could not free himself. Finally, tired of this persistence, he arose and said to him :—" Sir, I beg that you will choose some other place or cease to look at me ; you interrupt my play." The unknown smiled sadly, saluted Siegfried, and went out of the room without answering.

But the following night, Siegfried found him again opposite, standing in the same attitude that he ordinarily took ; this time his eye had in it something more penetrating.

Siegfried felt the color come into his face ; the pertinacity of a man whom he did not know, and with whom he did not care to become acquainted, appeared insulting to him.

" Sir," said he to him in such a manner as to be heard by all present, " if it pleases you to look at me thus, it is not pleasant for me to suffer it any longer."

And, saying this, by an imperious gesture, he pointed to the door of the saloon, as if to intimate to his unknown enemy the order to go out.

The stranger smiled sadly as at first, saluted him without saying a word, and retired.

The excitement produced by the play and the winnings, added to several warm libations, made Siegfried unable to

sleep. Towards daylight, as he was moving about on his couch without being able to repose, it suddenly seemed to him that he saw the shadow of the mysterious unknown appear before him. It was the same face wrinkled by grief; it was the same deep and devouring look. His poor habiliments showed, nevertheless, the style of a gentleman, who must have seen better days; and Siegfried remembered with regret that he had treated him thus cavalierly. He finally persuaded himself that the physiognomical expression of the unknown betrayed the anguish of a secret misery augmented by the aspect of a man still rich and whom fortune amused herself by goring with gold at a green covered table. He resolved to go and seek the stranger, cordially ask pardon for his rudeness, and offer him his assistance as delicately as possible.

It chanced that the first person that Siegfried met the next morning on the bather's promenade was this very stranger.

"Sir," said he to him, "I was one or two days ago rude and impolite towards you. I beg that you will allow me apologize." The stranger answered that Siegfried owed him no reparation; that all the wrong, if there were any, was on his part.

Baron Siegfried, piqued by the cool deportment of the gentleman, commenced, for the purpose of sounding him, talking about certain embarrassments in life which render the character hard, and cause the involuntary forgetfulness of what is due to courtesy. He tried to make the stranger understand, with all the skilfulness in such a case, that he should be happy to place at his service the sum he had won, if his luck at play could be transferred.

"Sir," answered the stranger, "you take me for a poor devil, and you are doing an act of liberality; but I am not yet deprived of all resources, for I have so few wants that it is easy for me to satisfy them at a trifling expense. If you think that you have offended me, it is not money that can sooth the pain that you have occasioned me."

"I think that I understand you," replied the baron, calmly,

"and I am at your disposal for any satisfaction that you are pleased to require."

"Good heaven, my dear sir," continued the unknown, "the chances of a duel between us would be very unequal. A duel besides appears to me, in general, but a poor game, in which children hurt themselves. But there are certain circumstances in life in which the earth becomes too narrow for two men, and when even one of these men lived on Caucasus and the other on the banks of the Tiber, one of them must be effaced from among the living to allow the other to breathe at ease. In these very rare cases a duel, but a duel without mercy, may become useful, indispensable. As for ourselves, I do not think that we are reduced to this experiment. A single combat would be madness. If I killed you, I should put an end perhaps to days, rich in hope and expectation; if I should fall, you would have put an end to a deplorable existence. You therefore see that the chances would never be equal. Besides, to put an end to this discussion, I assure you that I do not consider myself insulted. You desired me to leave the room, and—I yielded to your wishes—that is all."

The stranger's accent in uttering these words revealed, in spite of his efforts to conceal it, an innate suffering against which he tried in vain to struggle. Siegfried renewed more urgently his frank protestations, accounting for his anger by attributing it to the painful impression produced upon him by the singularly sad look of the stranger.

"May then this look," exclaimed the old man, "remain forever graven upon your memory to preserve you from the dangers which threaten your future. Distrust the uncertainty of gaming before it is too late to throw off the fascination which it already exercises upon you: for in less time than you would believe, I see you ruined and your honor lost!"

The baron could not refrain from repulsing this fatal threat; "all that he should lose amounted," he said, "to two hundred louis d'or; and his pertinacity in playing only proceeded from a formal vow he had taken to triumph over his luck at play, which was tiresome to him beyond all expression."

“Ah!” exclaimed the stranger, “it is precisely that accursed luck which leads you towards destruction. The interest of curiosity which you take in it will change into a delirium of avarice, into a madness for betting, as soon as you shall once have seen your money disappear under the banker’s rake or into the pockets of your neighbors. Your manner of doing and acting at the pharo table recalled to me, the bygone days, the unfortunate destiny of a young man who started in this fatal career under the same auspices as yourself. That is the reason, my dear sir, why I contemplated you the other day with so earnest a look; I remembered a life crushed in its flower by the most atrocious passion which has ever ravaged the heart of man. Stay, since we have become acquainted, allow me to relate you this story, not to offer you a lesson, but to give you the advice of a friend, illustrated by an example.”

He then seated himself upon a stone bench shaded by elm trees which bordered the promenade; Baron Siegfried took a place by his side, and here is what was related to him:—“Chevalier Menars possessed like yourself, baron, the most distinguished qualities of mind and heart. Nature, in creating him to succeed, had only treated him without liberality as far as the gifts of fortune are concerned. His situation was near to want, and it was only by force of economy that he could meet the expenses required by his rank. But if he could not allow himself the pleasure of gaming, at least he was sheltered from the attacks of this dangerous passion. Living thus, without sacrifices and position, he could very nearly pass for a happy man.

A certain night some friends succeeded in leading him to a gaming house. The game was going on before his eyes, but he followed the chances of it with an impassibility which would have done honor to the gods; he saw, without frowning piles of ducats roll on the table, then disappear under the banker’s rake. “Zounds!” suddenly exclaimed an old colonel, “there is the chevalier Menars, a lucky man if there

be such. If he would bet for me, I would break the bank immediately."

It was in vain that the chevalier refused, he was obliged to yield to the wishes of the colonel, and take his place at the green table. Unspeakable chance guided his play, so that in a short time he had won a considerable sum for the colonel. But instead of taking pleasure himself in the emotions of the game, he felt his antipathy for this diversion increase from day to day, and he took the resolution never to set foot in any gaming house again. The colonel, who was always unlucky, made useless efforts to induce him to return to his assistance ; and it was necessary, to put an end to the importunities of this mad gamester, that the chevalier Menars should formally announce that he would rather fight a thousand duels than to touch another card during his life.

A year from that time the arrival of the miserable sum of money which provided poorly for the subsistence of poor Menars, having been retarded by some accident, he fell into the most cruel penury, and, in spite of the strugglings of self-esteem, he found himself obliged to call upon a friend's purse, who, at least on this occasion, did not hesitate to assist him, only reproaching him with not knowing how to use the resources that his luck at play might create for him. This remark, made by chance, and at a time when poverty so closely pressed upon him, made chevalier Menars reflect ; and every night he heard buzzed in his ears the accursed words used in gaming houses, and especially in the pharo banks. The sound of gold pieces vibrated about him everywhere ; it was a diabolical temptation. Honest Menars reasoned with himself :—" One single night," said he to himself, " might withdraw me from misery and make the fortune of my whole life ; instead of depending upon my friends, I could myself sometimes come to their aid ; and then I should be considered, respected, honored ! For all this it is only necessary to abandon myself to destiny, to chance."

The lending friend, who heard him speak in this manner,

took him at his word, and slipped into his pocket twenty golden louis to lead him to the pharo bank. Menars played and won a thousand golden louis without study, and without combination of the cards. He played blind man's buff with fortune; she allowed herself to be caught with exceeding good will.

When the chevalier awoke, the morning after this feverish night, in his own room, his first glance fell upon the piles of louis ranged with care upon his dressing table. He thought at first that he was dreaming; he stretched out his arm to draw the table nearer; then his hand caressed the seductive little pieces which shone coquettishly in the first rays of the rising sun.—The sensation that he then felt decided the course of his life. The poison of avarice penetrated his veins: Menars became suddenly an unbridled gamester, and waited with gnawing impatience the hour for the opening of the gambling houses every evening. Luck was faithful to him, and in a few weeks he had won enormous sums. From this time the chevalier thought no one worthy of risking a few ducats against his heaps of gold. He wanted a broader stage of action; he opened a bank, which became in a short time the richest in Paris. The gamesters flocked to it, and the fortune of Menars took up its abode there. But the gambler's irregular life wore away day by day the heart and soul of the poor man. And there soon remained in him but little of the gentleman; he was now nothing more than a sordid, avaricious gambler. It happened one night that his luck began to turn against him. A little dried up old man, badly dressed, approached the green table, and timidly threw down on a card a well worn louis.—He lost, made his bet again, and lost again; it lasted thus for some time, until the old man, who, in spite of his losses, always doubled his bets, finally lost at a single deal five hundred golden louis.

“Good God! Signor Vertua,” exclaimed one of the players; “go on, I beg of you; for, at the game you are playing so well, a chance will come for you, you will break the bank!”

The old man threw a wild look at the man who spoke thus,

then he disappeared for a time ; but he was soon seen again, upright in his place, and well provided with fresh pieces of gold, which successively went to join the first.

At the end of the play, chevalier Menars stopped the player who had laughed at the old man, and reproached him with compromising the calmness and dignity which ought to reign in the house.

"What!" answered the gamester, "you do not yet know old Francesco Vertua; otherwise you would have found our jests quite natural; know, my dear friend, that this old man Vertua, born at Naples, but who for fifteen years has worried the streets of Paris, is the most rascally usurer on the face of the earth, and I know a thousand individuals whose substance he has swallowed up. It is but just that in his turn he should know by experience what the misery is to which he has reduced so many families. This is the first time that this individual pushes himself into a gambling house; but as the followers of Satan doubt nothing, the idea has come into his head to break your bank, and, without counting chances, he has persisted in losing his last piece of money. This time, at least, I hope that he will not be seen again, and that he will seek in some other place the means of repairing his fortune."

Nevertheless, the following night, Vertua reappeared, played, and lost more than he had the night before. This new reverse of fortune did not diminish his immovability; a smile of bitter irony only curled his lip. Each of the following nights still saw him at his post, and he lost unceasingly; it was calculated that at the end of the week he had passed over to the banker thirty thousand louis. Several days then elapsed without his being seen; but one evening he came, pale and in disorder; he watched the game for some time without speaking, but with sparkling eyes. Then, at the moment when Menars was about to make a new deal, Vertua made his way to his side, and whispered these words hoarsely in his ear:—"Sir, I possess in Rue St. Honoré, a richly furnished house; I have gold plate and jewels to the amount of eighty thousand dollars. Will you take the stake?"

"Let it be so," answered Menars, without turning his head, and he continued the deal. "The queen!" exclaimed the usurer. The queen loses. Vertua staggered like a drunken man, and leaned against the wall, cold and immovable as a statue. Nobody paid any farther attention to him. When the hour for closing the gambling room had arrived, Vertua revived, and dragging himself with faltering footsteps towards the banker, "Mr. Menars," said he to him, "I have a word more to say to you."

"Do it quickly, I am in a hurry," answered Menars in a disdainful tone, drawing the key from his safe and putting it in his pocket. "Sir," continued the old man, "my whole fortune has passed into your hands; I have nothing left; I do not know where I shall lay my head to-morrow, nor how I shall procure a morsel of bread. Well, it is to you that I have recourse. Lend me the tenth part of the sum which you have won from me this last week, so that I can be able to begin business again and try and earn my poor living."

"Are you mad?" interrupted Menars. "Do you imagine that a banker ever lends money to gamblers whom he has broken?"

"You are right," replied the old man; "but the money that I ask of you is not for the purpose of playing against you."

"What matters it!" said Menars, "I do not lend."

"Well then, my worthy sir," continued the old man, whose paleness became more livid, "well then do not lend to me; give me alms."

"Alms! go and ask of those whom your infamous usury has reduced to misery and want."

At these words old Vertua hid his face in his hands, and fell on his knees weeping bitterly. Chevalier Menars had his safe in which was secured his golden gains, carried to his carriage, he then said coldly to the usurer:—"When do you intend, signor Vertua, to give me possession of your house, your plate and jewels?"

"This very moment," exclaimed Vertua, regaining, as if by the aid of a spring, his firmness. "Come, sir, follow me!"

"In that case," continued Menars, "my carriage can take us both there, and I will give you until to-morrow to vacate."

On the road they both kept a mournful silence. When they had arrived, Vertua rang the bell softly; an old woman opened the door.

"Jesus be thanked!" exclaimed she, "you have come at last! my poor young lady Angela is in great anxiety."

"Silence!" said Vertua in a whisper. "May it be that she has not heard the bell; Angela must be ignorant of my return."

When he was alone with the chevalier, in an out of the way room,—“I have a daughter, sir,” said he to him; “this is all that remains to me of an existence which might have been happy, if I had not become a victim of the passion for gambling. I formerly travelled over half of Europe, opening pharo banks everywhere, and winning, as you have done, enormous sums. God only knows how many fortunes I have reduced to nothing, as pitilessly as you have swallowed up mine to-day.—Heaven is just, I am well punished. It is not for myself that I regret fortune, but it is for Angela, for my daughter, the last object of my affection, whom I have just condemned to a frightful indigence; she is innocent of my faults, and ought not to have borne the punishment of my passions.—Alas! sir, will you not allow my daughter to carry away her clothing, her ornaments?”

“In no manner do I oppose it,” answered the chevalier; “you can carry away the household utensils that are indispensable to you. I do not pretend to exercise my right on anything except upon the real property that you declared to me.”

The old man Vertua fixed his moistened eyes upon the chevalier without speaking a single word. Finally, overcome by emotion, he burst out into weeping and moaning, and,

dragging himself on his knees before the chevalier,—“Sir,” cried he to him beseechingly, “if you have any feeling of humanity left, take pity on my poor child; lend her, in order that she may live, the twentieth part of my fortune that fate has thrown into your hands.”

“Ah! decidedly,” replied the chevalier, “this comedy is tiresome and annoying—let us end it!”

At this moment the door is opened; a young girl, in tears, half dressed, threw herself into the room where this scene was passing. “My father! my father!” exclaimed she, “I have heard everything. You have then lost all? all? And your Angela, you forgot her! You did not think then that the day you became unfortunate you would have a daughter left to love you and take care of you in your old age! I will work for your support, my father; come, let us quit this house, let us fly from the sight of this cruel man who gloats over your despair; we shall find some home where, with my labor, and the assistance of God, I shall be able to place you at your ease.”

Before this picture of angelic filial piety, chevalier Menars felt the sting of remorse penetrate his soul. It seemed to him that he saw in this beautiful young girl the angel chosen by heaven to condemn his hardness of heart. He could not bear the energetic look of Angela, who treated him thus scornfully. She was so admirably beautiful, that it was impossible to see her thus without feeling the ardor of extreme love. Chevalier Menars remained as if fascinated by the magnetism of this apparition; and pointing with his finger to a casket that a servant had just brought into the room, he exclaimed:—“Take back this accursed money; I did not win it; I cannot keep it, I will give you even more. Take it, take it——”

But Angela proudly repulsed this concession;—“It is not,” said she, “either gold or fortune that assures the happiness of God’s nobly endowed creatures; carry off those vile riches for which you sacrifice without shame all that men hold

sacred. Go, and may they surround you with a curse that nothing shall efface."

"Yes," then exclaimed chevalier Menars, beside himself; "yes, I am accursed, I know it; but can you really pronounce a curse without hope! Oh, Angela, the sight of you alone has caused an inexpressible change in me; but you cannot and will not understand me; but yet it imports, to me, death or life. For I love you, Angela, I feel it and I cannot refrain from it. I can renounce, for your sake, my gambler's life. I can, with the gold that I possess, expiate my past life by benefiting all around me. But if I do not succeed in gaining your good opinion, you will soon see me fall dead at your feet!" and, under the influence of this fiery exaltation, chevalier Menars sprang out of the room like a madman. Old Vertua, who first thought of the necessity of regaining his fortune, wished to try this opportunity, and pressed Angela to become the chevalier's guardian angel.—But the noble young girl forcibly rejected this proposition.—Nevertheless, whilst the gambler Menars only appeared to her worthy of contempt, fate, which so victoriously plays with our wills and feelings, gradually prepared the accomplishment of this long rejected union. Chevalier Menars suddenly decided upon changing his course of life. He shut up his pharo bank, and he was no longer met with in any gambling house. The strangest and most contradictory reports were circulated concerning him; but instead of paying heed to them, he became more and more savage and inaccessible.—Angela was not ignorant of the change that had taken place in him. Her woman's vanity, flattered by such a proof of his passion, became gradually a serious and intimate affection. When, several months after their first interview, she met the chevalier in a walk of Malmaison park, she could not refrain from a shudder. He was so pale, so cast down, appeared to be suffering so much, so unhappy!—Vertua, who did not lose sight of his marriage project, from which he expected to make an excellent speculation, gave him a very friendly salu-

tation, and begged him to come and visit them in his house Rue Saint Honoré.

The chevalier took care not to refuse an invitation so favorable to his passion. His visits became frequent, and his love for the young girl grew day by day; so that finally, persuaded that she really loved chevalier Menars, she consented to give him her hand.

Several days after the betrothal, Angela, whilst looking from her window, saw a fine regiment of cavalry on the march to Spain defile before her. Passing before Vertua's house, one of the soldiers reined in his horse, and, freeing himself from the ranks, made several signs of adieu to the young girl. This soldier was the son of a neighbor of Vertua, named Duvernet. Brought up almost from infancy quite near her, this young man had accustomed himself to loving the young girl, whom he saw every day; and he had only ceased visiting Vertua on learning the object of the attentions of chevalier Menars, and the good reception that he received. Then knowing that his love was hopeless, he had enlisted.

Vertua's daughter could not well hide the impression that she had received, so that her father and the chevalier himself might have guessed that something strange was passing in her heart. But Angela did not allow her secret to escape; the assiduous attentions of the chevalier besides effaced the remembrance of Duvernet from her mind, and marriage, which soon launched her into a new kind of existence, was an aurora of happiness which was only saddened by the sudden death of Vertua. The old gambler died unrepenting the sin of his life. At his last moments his fingers closed as if to shuffle, cut and deal the cards; and the last words which escaped from his lips with his last breath were the banker's cry:—
“Loses! wins!”

When Angela saw herself left alone in the world with the chevalier, the remembrance of the last words of her father, and the agonizing crisis which had brought back to him before death his fatal gambler's instinct, came to make her

fear that this terrible passion might be in her husband a fire smouldering beneath the ashes which the least spark could reanimate and kindle into a blaze ; her sad forebodings were too soon changed into a painful certainty. Whatever terror the manner of death of old Francesco Vertua had occasioned in the mind of the chevalier, the effect of the spectacle was, notwithstanding, such as to awake in him the but too active thoughts of gambling ; and, without his being able himself to account for his sensations, he saw himself every night in a dream seated at a bank, gathering again heaps of gold,—his evil star regaining its influence.

The meeting with a perverted man, an old attendant upon the chevalier's bank, ended in convincing him that his conduct was weak and ridiculous ; he was astonished at having been able to sacrifice to his love for a woman the pleasures of an existence alone enviable.

Several months after, chevalier Menar's bank was reopened. His luck was true to him, gold rained down upon him ; but Angela's happiness had vanished like a beautiful dream. The chevalier now only treated her with indifference, almost with scorn. Weeks, whole months elapsed, and she saw him not ; an old servant took care of the house, and the under servants were constantly changed at the caprice of the chevalier ; so that Angela, like a stranger in her own house, found no where the least consolation. Often when she heard during her wakeful nights the chevalier's carriage stop before the house, and the chevalier's voice in rude tones ordering the heavy cash box to be brought in, and then the door of his distant chamber shut noisily, a torrent of bitter tears ran down her cheeks ; a hundred times, in the anguish of her despair, the name of Duvernet escaped from her lips, and she supplicated Providence to put an end to her miserable existence thus poisoned by grief.

It happened that a young man of good family, after having lost all his fortune at the chevalier's bank, blew his brains out with a pistol at the very table on which they were playing.

The chevalier alone preserved his coldness, and seeing that every body was leaving, asked if it was the custom to quit play before the usual hour on account of a young madman who did not know how to conduct himself. This accident caused a great sensation. The unexampled conduct of the chevalier disgusted the most hardened gamblers; there was universal disapproval, and the police suppressed Menars' bank. He was accused, besides, of fraudulent practices; his singular luck gave only too much weight to this accusation. He could not defend himself, and the enormous fine that was imposed upon him deprived him of a great part of his riches. He saw himself insulted, shamed;—he then returned to the arms of his wife, who, in spite of his ill treatment, willingly received him in his repentance; for the remembrance of her father, who had thus abjured the irregularity of gaming, allowed her to catch a gleam of hope, and the ripened age of the chevalier was another reason for her to believe his conversion real and durable. They both left Paris and went to Genoa, the birthplace of Angela.

The chevalier lived there at first in a very retired manner; but he could never reëstablish those sweet domestic relations that his evil genius had destroyed. The calm was of short duration. His bad reputation had followed him from Paris to Genoa, and in spite of the almost irresistible temptation which he felt to open a bank, he was absolutely forbidden to do so.

At this time the richest bank in Genoa was kept by a French colonel, who had been forced by serious wounds to quit the service. The chevalier presented himself at this bank with mixed feelings of envy and hatred, but with the idea that his habitual luck would soon enable him to ruin his rival. At the sight of the chevalier, the colonel, with a gaiety which contrasted strongly with his usually serious manners, said that from that moment alone, gambling received for him a real attraction, when it became necessary to struggle against the luck of chevalier Menars. The cards were in

effect favorable to the chevalier during the first deals. But blinded by the excess of his luck, and having exclaimed :—“ I will break the bank ! ” he lost at one deal a considerable sum of money. The colonel, ordinarily immovable in good as well as in bad fortune, took up the chevalier’s money with evident manifestations of excessive joy.

From that moment the chevalier’s star set to rise no more. Every night he played, and every night he lost, until he had nothing left except two thousand ducats in bills of exchange. He had run about all day to realize this paper, and had returned home at a very late hour. When night came, he prepared to go out provided with his last resources, when Angela, who suspected the truth, stopped him in the way, threw herself at his feet, and with her eyes bathed in tears, supplicated him to renounce his fatal resolution, and refrain from bringing misery upon himself. The chevalier raised her from the ground, embraced her with painful emotion, and said to her in a husky voice :—“ Angela, my dear Angela, I must follow my destiny wherever it leads me ! But, to-morrow,—to-morrow all thy trials shall be at an end ; for, I swear it, I play to-night for the last time ! Calm thyself, my sweet friend ; sleep, dream of peaceful days, dream of a happy life which thou shalt soon enjoy—that will bring me luck ! ” Saying these words the chevalier kissed his wife and precipitately fled. He played and lost all. He stood still near the colonel, and fixed his eyes on the gaming table with a sad and stupid look.

“ You no longer bet, chevalier ? ” said the colonel, shuffling the cards for a new deal.

“ I am nothing but a beggar,” murmured the chevalier in a voice tremulous with fury and despair, and he still kept his eyes fixed upon the table, without seeing that the players were winning more and more from the banker.

The colonel quietly continued the game. “ But you have a pretty wife,” said he in a low voice, without looking at the chevalier, and shuffling the cards for another deal.—“ What is that you say ? ” exclaimed the chevalier in a rage.—“ Ten

thousand ducats, or your Angela," said the colonel, half turning towards him as he handed the cards to him to cut.

"You are mad!" exclaimed the chevalier, who had meanwhile recovered his coolness, and perceived that the colonel was losing incessantly.

"I will play twenty thousand ducats against Angela," said the colonel again in a low voice to the chevalier, stopping a moment whilst shuffling the cards. The chevalier was silent; the colonel commenced the game, and nearly all the cards were against him. "Agreed!" said the chevalier in the colonel's ear as he began a new deal; and he laid the queen on the gaming table.

At the first play the queen lost. The chevalier stepped back, gnashed his teeth, and went to the window, against which he leaned, despair and death painted upon his face.—The play was over. The colonel approached the chevalier and said in a mocking manner:—"Well! what is the matter with you?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the chevalier, distractedly, "you have reduced me to beggary; but you must be mad to suppose that you could win my wife. Is a woman a slave to be disposed of by a master, who in a moment of infamous blindness has been capable of selling her or staking her against a sum of money at a gaming table? But, as you would have had to pay twenty thousand ducats had the queen won, it is just. Come then and have the disappointment of being repulsed with horror by her.

"Despair yourself, chevalier," replied the colonel in a satanic tone; "despair yourself when you see her joyfully throw herself into my arms,—when you learn the consecration of our union and the happiness which must crown our most cherished desires!—You call me a madman, chevalier, I only wished to win the right to claim her from you! Your wife's consent belongs to me already; for know that she has long loved me. Learn that I am Duvernet, the son of Vertua's neighbor, brought up with Angela, united to her by an

ardent love, and separated from her by your satanic seductions. It was only, alas ! at my departure for the army that Angela knew the sympathy which existed between us ; I have learned all, it was too late ! A hellish inspiration told me that I should succeed in ruining you at play, that is why I gave myself up to it. I followed you to Genoa and I succeeded ! Now let us go and look for your wife ! ”

The chevalier was annihilated. A thousand poignards pierced his heart. This fatal secret was at last revealed to him ; he now understood to what excess of suffering poor Angela had been subjected. He mechanically followed the colonel, who walked rapidly on. When they arrived, and as the colonel had already placed his hand on Angela’s chamber door, the chevalier drew him back quickly, exclaiming :—
“ My wife is sleeping, you will only trouble her repose ! ”
“ Nonsense,” replied the colonel, “ do you think that she has ever enjoyed a moment of peaceful slumber since you have devoted her to such miserable anguish ? ” And the colonel, pushing him firmly aside, was about to enter, when Menars threw himself at his feet, exclaiming in frightful despair :—
“ For pity’s sake ! for heaven’s sake ! after having reduced me to beggary, leave, leave me my wife ! ”

“ It was thus that old Vertua was before you, without being able to soften your stony heart. Suffer then heaven’s vengeance ! ” Saying this, he again approached Angela’s chamber. The chevalier sprang with a bound, violently pushed open the door, ran to the bed, crying out :—“ Angela ! Angela ! ” He bent over her, took her hand——

Then stopping suddenly and trembling convulsively, he stretched himself up to his full height and cried out in a loud voice :—“ Look ! you have won the body of my wife ! ”

The colonel shudderingly approached the bed.

Angela lay cold and pale. She was dead ! grief had destroyed her. At the sight colonel Duvernet uttered a lamentable cry and ran madly out of this house of mourning.—
He was never seen more.

*Der magnetiseur, Phantasie
Stücke in Collot's manier, II the
Hempel's ed. vol. VI, p. 57*

FASCINATION.

“Dreams resemble the foam on the wave which passes away and vanishes,” said old baron H——, stretching out his arm to ring for his valet de chambre Kaspar. For the hour for retiring had long since sounded; the autumn wind blew with violence, and Maria, a beautiful young girl, wrapped up in an immense shawl, struggled to keep awake. A little farther on stood Ottmar, the baron's son, a brave student, whose brain philosophized concerning everything.

“Father,” said the young man, “how can you think that dreams are not mysterious events which place us in relation with the invisible world?” “My friend,” answered the baron, “I am of the opinion of the materialists who see nothing but what is very natural in those pretended mysteries of nature, of which our imagination is the sole cause.”

“But,” observed Maria, the beautiful girl, “may it not be that dreams, which you speak so slightly of, are the result of the fermentation which takes place in the brain, and which disengages during the hours of slumber our vital spirits from the prison of the senses, to lead them to soar in regions neither bounded by time nor space?”

“My dear girl,” replied the baron, “I think I hear, in listening to you, the emphatic incoherences of our friend Alban. Thou knowest, besides, my incredulity regarding all the systems improvised by the visionaries of the present day.—Dreams are the fruits of the over excitation of our organs,

and I see the proof of it in the disagreeable impressions which they give rise to during their existence and after they are over. If dreams produce real relations between us and the invisible world, why should they not be an initiation into the felicities of which religion offers the hope after this earthly existence?"

Ottmar was about to raise an endless discussion on this subject, but the baron did not allow him time. "Let us break off here," said he; "I am not in a humor to begin a controversy. I remember, besides, that this day, the ninth of September, is the anniversary to me of a youthful remembrance, the thought of which awakens painful sensations." "But," interrupted the student, "is it not established that the magnetic influence——"

"Oh!" exclaimed the baron, "never pronounce before me that word; the name of magnetism disgusts and wounds me excessively; he who professes this odious art pays sooner or later, by his own ruin, for the guilty curiosity which leads him to raise the veil with which God covers his works. I remember, my children, that at the time I was studying in the military academy in Berlin, there was amongst our professors a man whose features will never leave my thoughts, for I could not look at him without experiencing a secret fear. To a gigantic stature, and the leanness of a skeleton, was added one of those physiognomies which the strangest imagination would hardly dare to dream of. He was endowed with great strength and consummate skill. He related of himself that, being a major in the Danish service, he was obliged to become an exile on account of a duel; but some people supposed that instead of duel it was a murder committed on the person of his general, which had caused his flight. He was a very hard man and practised an unexampled severity towards the pupils of the academy. But there were days in which his character seemed entirely changed. He then appeared the most indulgent and affectionate man you could possibly meet with. During these moments of expansion, if he pressed

our hands, the contact caused a singular fluid to run in our veins, which placed us under his influence by an inexplicable sympathy. But these days of calm were rare. He quickly regained his habits of severity, which filled us with fear at the sight of him. Sometimes he became exalted to a kind of delirium; he might be seen, dressed in his old red uniform, traversing the courts of the academy, and fighting the empty air with his long sword, as if he were standing before a furious adversary; then he made motions as if he were trampling a body under his feet, accompanying all these gestures with horrible oaths. Sometimes he climbed the trees with the agility of a wild cat, or he ran like a wild beast, uttering savage cries. These fits often lasted for a whole day. On the morrow he was calm, and without a remembrance of the extravagant behavior of the day before; but his character became more and more intractable and violent. The strangest reports were circulated concerning him in the city and in the academy. It was said that the major had the power to cure all diseases by the touch, or even by a look alone; and this opinion was so strong, that he was obliged one day to drive away the people, who importuned him to try his mysterious power on them, with blows. Some people went so far as to say that he had dealings with the infernal spirits, and that sooner or later his life would end with some catastrophe.—For the rest, and whatever might be his conduct towards others, the major constantly showed himself mild before me, an attachment which drew me powerfully towards him. I will not relate to you all the singular scenes which passed between us, but this is a fact that I have not been able to forget. During the night of the ninth of September 17—, I dreamed that the major had come to my bedside, and fixing upon me a penetrating look, had covered my eyes with his right hand, saying to me:—‘Miserable earthly creature, in me behold thy master! I have, like God, the power of reading thy thoughts!’ At the same time I felt something sharp and cold like a steel blade penetrate through my forehead to the brain.

I uttered a fearful cry which awoke me, I was in a profuse perspiration, and nearly out of my senses. I arose from my bed with difficulty, and opened the window to refresh myself with a little fresh air. But what was again my terror in perceiving, in the moonlight, the fatal major dressed in his red coat, open a gate of the academy which led to the fields, and shut it again forcibly after him ! I fell down in a fainting fit. When the morning came I related to our principal what had happened to me. He assured me at first that I had been dreaming ; but as the major had not yet appeared, the morning being far advanced, we went to his chamber. The door was barricaded on the inside, and we had to force it open. We found the major lying on the floor, his eyes glaring, his mouth covered with bloody froth ; he held his sword in a hand stiffened by death. No efforts could bring him to life."

The baron added nothing more to this recital. Ottmar, who had listened to him attentively, was meditating, with his face buried in his hands. Maria was quite tremulous with emotion. At this moment, the painter, Franz Bickert, an old friend of the family, who had noiselessly entered the room during the baron's narration, burst into a loud laugh, and said :—" Those are truly gay stories to relate before young girls before going to bed ! As for myself, my friends, I have a system quite the opposite from our dear baron. As I know by experience that dreams are the fruit of sensations felt during the day, I always take care, before going to sleep, to drive away all painful thoughts, and to amuse my mind by some joyful remembrance of past times. It is an excellent preventive against the nightmare. At most, my friends, these terrifying dreams which sometimes torment us, such as the illusion of falling from a tower, of being beheaded, and a thousand others more or less disagreeable, are the result of physical pain which reacts upon our moral faculties. This reminds me, I remember a dream in which I was present at an orgie. An officer and a student quarrelled, and threw glasses at each other's heads ; I tried to separate them, but

in the struggle I feel myself badly wounded in the hand, the pain of which awakes me,—my hand was really bleeding, for I had just scratched it with a large pin which was stuck in my coverlid. I have had at other times frightful dreams, and ———”

“Ah! I beg of you,” exclaimed Maria, “spare me the recital of it, for you will torture me all night long——”

“No!” said Bickert, “there is no escape. You must know that in a dream I was invited to a brilliant tea party at the house of the princess Almaldasongi. As I reached the middle of the room clothed in my finest dress coat, I set about addressing her in a most flattering manner, when on throwing a complacent look upon my costume, I perceived that I had forgotten my breeches!”

An explosive laugh followed this outbreak of Bickert.—But without leaving his auditory time to recollect themselves, the joyous artist continued:—“Do you wish,” said he, “that I should relate you a mishap still more humiliating? I dreamed, another night, that I was only twenty years of age, and that I was about dancing a quadrille with a beautiful lady. I had expended my last crown to improve the appearance of my last coat. I go, I mingle with the crowd, beautifully dressed and sparkling with jewels, that is clustering around the door of the saloon, when an accursed Spaniel dog opened the stove door before me, and said:—‘Mr. Beauty, through this hole, if you please, you will take the trouble to pass!’”

“Hold! last night, I dreamed that I had become a sheet of paper; an ignoble apprentice poet, armed with a badly mended goose quill, scratched me in all directions whilst writing upon my poor individual self his insipid rhymes blotted with erasures. Another time, I dreamed that a surgeon took off my limbs one at a time, as though I had been a mannikin, and cruelly amused himself with trying the effect produced by planting my feet in the middle of my back, or adapting my right arm to lengthen my left leg—Lastly——”

But here the baron and his children were rolling on the

sofa, uttering such noisy bursts of laughter, that friend Franz Bickert was obliged to renounce his sallies. Ottmar took up the conversation :—" Our friend," said he, " places himself by his recitals in contradiction with his system ; for he tells funny stories, or he has not succeeded in preparing himself for pleasant dreams. However it may be, I am not the less persuaded of the virtue of magnetism——"

" Enough," exclaimed the baron, " are you going to begin again on that subject ? It would suit me better to have Maria make us a bowl of punch to keep us in a good humor." Bickert loudly applauded this idea ; and whilst Maria set herself to work, he busied himself in reanimating the fire smouldering in the chimney corner. When the punch was made, Ottmar filled the glasses, and Bickert said, after emptying his at a single draught :—" I have never found this liquor so delicious as when it is prepared by the hands of our pretty Maria. She communicates to everything that she touches a celestial perfume. The mysterious influence of her beauty produces this charming effect ; this is to my senses the most indisputable magnetism——"

" Still talking of magnetism !" interrupted the baron.— " For heaven's sake, shall we never have done this evening with the strange and the extravagant ? Maria is, indeed, a good and handsome young girl ; but thanks to you, I shall begin soon to take her for a being from the other world.— Let us try then, I beg of you, to live peaceably this good common life which is so sweet ! " -

" Nevertheless," replied Ottmar, " I have a great desire to relate to friend Bickert a fact confided to me by Alban, which left a deep impression upon my mind. Alban became intimate during his stay at the university, with a young man named Theobald, whose exterior exercised at first a complete seduction over those who saw him. Theobald possessed at the same time a happy disposition and a native goodness.— But gradually, after his acquaintance with Alban, his soul became clouded, his character became sad and uneasy ; his

imagination, from reflective merged into exaltation. Alban alone had the power to command his irresistible nature, whose energy was wasted in useless struggles against the ills of life.

Theobald, after having taken his departure at the University of J——, was to return to his native city, to marry his tutor's daughter, and live quietly on an ample income left him by his parents. All his tastes resolved into the study of animal magnetism, the first lessons in which were given to him by his friend Alban. He proposed nothing less than the pursuit of this science to the extremest possible limits; the development of its mysterious operations.

A short time after his return to his home, he wrote a despairing letter to Alban, in which he announced to him that during his absence an officer of a travelling regiment, having lodged on his way at the house of his tutor, had fallen in love with the young girl, and had succeeded in making her share his passion. When this officer was obliged to set out to follow the army to which he belonged, the young girl had felt such grief at the separation, that her reason became disturbed, and they feared for her life. Thus, poor Theobald had to regret the heart, now lost to him, of his betrothed, and also feel the dread of seeing the sole object of his affection perish before his eyes at any moment. Alban immediately replied to him, and told him that his misfortune was not irreparable, and that magnetism could infallibly restore his beloved to him. Theobald profited by this advice, and with the consent of the mother of his betrothed, he went every night and sat near her at the time when, yielding to the influence of slumber, she became subject to painful dreams, in which the officer's name came unceasingly from her lips. He gradually exercised upon the young girl the passes of which Alban had taught him the secret virtue; then after having brought her into a state of somnambulism, he conversed with her, softly recalled to her the remembrance of their childhood and their tender and mutual affection. Gradually the young girl allowed herself to be overcome by the ascendancy of the

magic power which surrounded her, and every time that she became subject to the influence of somnambulism, her sensations and the answers to questions addressed to her naturally returned to Theobald and the remembrances of their early days. The ascendancy of Theobald became so complete, that his betrothed lived only by his life and will. It seemed as if the soul of her friend had become a part of her being, or that she herself lived in him."

Ottmar had proceeded thus far in his story, when Maria suddenly changed color, uttered a sharp cry, and would have fallen fainting on the floor, if Bickert had not sprung up in time to receive her into his arms. They tried to restore her, but nothing would bring her back to consciousness. She appeared to be dead.—"Ah! would to God!" exclaimed Ottmar, "that Alban were here, he alone could save her!"

The door opened; Alban himself appeared, approached the young girl slowly, and said to her as if she heard him: "Maria, what is the matter with you?" The sick girl trembled at these words, made several quick movements and murmured:—"Leave me, accursed man, I will at least die without suffering!" Alban smiled and looked around upon those present. "Fear nothing," said he, "it is a little attack of fever; but she will go to sleep, and in six hours, when she will awake, you will give her twelve drops of the liquid contained in this flask." At the same time he put into Ottmar's hands a little silver vessel, bowed, and withdrew as he had entered.

"Well done!" said Bickert; "here is another marvelous doctor! His look inspired, his voice prophetic, the flask of elixir, nothing is wanting!"

"My poor friend Bickert," said the old baron, "our evening has ended very sadly. Ever since the departure of Alban, I have often dreamed that some fatal accident would recall him to us. Pray heaven that my presentiment has deceived me."

"But," my worthy friend," replied Bickert, "you must,

it seems to me, look upon the arrival of Alban as fortunate ; for to say the least, he is a skilful physician, and you ought not to forget that formerly our gentle Maria suffered from nervous attacks, against which all remedies were powerless. Alban cured her in a few weeks by means of this magnetism that you abhor. I believe that it is well to avoid too rigorous prejudice against modern sciences ; nature hides in her breast thousands of secrets whose discovery will occupy ages perhaps——”

“ Well ! I must say,” interrupted the baron, “ that I am not any farther behind the times than others, nor more an enemy to the progress of science ; but I believe, to tell the truth, that my antipathy to magnetism proceeds in a great measure from the difficulty I experience in defining this Alban in whose favor my son is so infatuated. I try in vain to seize something real in the multiplied characters in which this singular man appears. I know that gratitude is due him for the cure of my daughter ; I would willingly have offered him, for this service, the treasures of a king. Well, dear Bickert, picture to yourself that a repugnance that I could not control has always prevented me from cordially showing my gratitude to him ; day by day this man becomes more hateful to me, in spite of my efforts to overcome this singularity ; when I look at him, it seems to me that I see again before my eyes that diabolical Danish major who had formerly occasioned me such terrible frights.”

“ Ah ! ” exclaimed Bickert, “ that then, without proceeding any farther, is the secret of this inexplicable aversion ! It is not Alban, it is the Danish major who besieges your imagination with the unfortunate resemblance. This worthy doctor Alban bears the burden on account of his hooked nose and penetrating black eyes. And even should he be something of a visionary, let us excuse this, since he wills and practices well ; let us throw aside his human frailties, and let us render homage to the great skill of the physician.”

“ What you say now, Franz,” interrupted the baron, rising,

“is not the impression of your thoughts; you seek to palliate my apprehensions; but your efforts are useless; I see under the human form of this Alban an infernal being, from whom there is every thing to be feared! Listen, Franz, watch with me over this man, for there is in him, I repeat to you, something formidable and malicious.”

The two old friends took each other by the hand before separating. The night was silent and dark. Maria reposed in a deep slumber. She awoke at the expiration of six hours, and doctor Alban's prescription was followed. A few moment's after, she appeared in a more flourishing state of health than ever, and had no remembrance of her accident the night before. Alban that day did not appear at the family meals, and sent word that a long correspondence would occupy all his time.

MARIA TO ADELGUNDE.

Dear friend of my childhood, with what joy your letter has filled me! my feelings overpowered me at the sight of your handwriting. With what happiness I found in it good news concerning your brother Hippolyt, my cherished affianced husband! Your poor friend, dear Adelgunde, has been fearfully sick. I cannot explain to you the kind of pain that I endured. Every thing appeared to me the opposite of what it really was; the least noise pierced my head like the sound of a cannon; I had the most singular waking dreams; an unaccountable uneasiness consumed my strength; I felt death coming upon me with all his terrors, and yet I was impatient to live. All my physicians wasted their time in examinations and consultations, when one day my brother Ottmar brought one of his friends to the house, who cured me in a most surprising manner.

There appeared to me in nearly all my dreams a grave and handsome man, who, in spite of his youthful appearance, inspired me with deep respect. This strange personage drew me towards him by the magnet of a mysterious tenderness.—

Judge, my dear Adelgunde, judge of my surprise when I recognized in form and feature the man of my dreams in the friend that my brother introduced to us. Alban, that is his name, subjects me, in spite of myself, to the power of his look ; but instead of the nervous convulsions which agitated me, I felt a drowsy calmness pervade all my senses ; my dreams vanished, my slumber became profound, and the feverish vivacity of my spirits was quieted. Only that it happened to me sometimes, whilst sleeping, to believe myself endowed with a new sense. A mysterious communication established itself between Alban and myself ; he interrogates me, and I tell him what is passing in my mind, as if I were reading from a book. At another time Alban himself occupies my mind ; it seems to me that I find his thoughts within me, that he lights up by his will a flame in my soul which shines or is extinguished as this will attracts or repulses me ; it is a state of transubstantiation in which I find a happiness superior to all that life can offer. You will laugh at me perhaps, dear Adelgunde ; you will think me mad or very ill. But whatever it may be, think and be assured that I have never loved Hippolyt more, or desired his return with greater earnestness. Since Alban has subjected me to this power, which he calls, I believe, *magnetism*, it seems to me that it is through him I love Hippolyt with deeper tenderness. Alban, this sublime and beneficent spirit will protect both of us until after our union.

Sometimes, however, I am afraid of him. Strange suspicions tear away the veil of enthusiasm in which I have wrapped the figure of Alban in the depths of my soul. I have hours of fascination, during which I imagine that I see him in the midst of all the attributes that serve, as is said, to accomplish guilty sorceries. His noble features vanish, and I see a hideous skeleton, whose bones rattle in the folds of slimy reptiles that encompass it. For the rest, Alban, who possesses my confidence, and to whom I innocently relate all my sensations, all my doubts concerning him, never fails to

show himself unmoved by my scrutiny. He is always the same mild and affectionate man. This majestic calmness makes me ashamed of my foolish idea.

This, dear Adelgunde, is the history of my interior life.—My heart is lighter now that I have no secrets from thee. Farewell until we meet again.

ALBAN TO THEOBALD.

Existence is the reward of a struggle ; it is a struggle itself. The victory is to the strongest, for strength is the natural law of all things ; the being subjected adds its own strength to that which his conqueror already possessed.

The strength of intelligence has its combats and its victories, as well as physical strength. A medium power of intelligence often subjects and governs an immense physical force ; it is in us like a reflection from the Deity, by whom empire is given us over all creation.

We are ignorant of the mysteries of the union of soul and body ; the discovery of this science would endow us with the power of God himself. All that we can do this side of that point, is to exercise for the advantage of our desires, in the circle that is traced out for us, the amount of strength that is communicated to us for the purpose of enjoying the creation.

I have met on my way a young girl, the sight of whom has made the sympathetic chords vibrate within me. I felt that all power belonged to me to attach her life to my own ; but it was necessary to struggle against an adverse power that controlled her. This young girl is beloved, and she loves.—I concentrated upon a single point the whole force of my will. Woman has received from nature a passive organization ; it is in the sacrifice that she voluntarily makes of her individuality to pour out her soul into the bosom of the being who subjects her by his superiority, that the happiness occasioned by love resides.

The sojourn of a week near the beautiful Maria was sufficient for my observing penetration to gain a complete knowl-

edge of her. I applied to the exquisite delicacy of her organization the occult action of magnetism, the science which is laughed at by the vulgar. I established between her and myself sympathetic feelings of which neither absence nor separation can break the chain. She fell under my spiritual domination in attacks of hallucinations which her father and brother took for the effects of a nervous malady. Friend to the brother, who admired without understanding, certain experiments which I amused myself in exhibiting to him, I was called to the young girl in the capacity of a physician. She recognized me by a mysterious convulsion which was the assurance of my empire; for my look and secret will were sufficient to plunge her into a state of somnambulism, that is to say, to attract her soul towards my own. Since I have lived near her, the image of Hippolyt is being gradually effaced from her memory; the last obstacles will soon fall.

This Hippolyt is a colonel; he is at this moment following the fortunes of war far away from here. I do not wish him to be killed; I should even like to have him come back, for his presence would add another charm to victory of which I shall soon taste the delicious fruits. Farewell until I see thee again, my dear disciple.

The country, strewed with dead leaves, was in mourning. Leaden clouds moved in the sky, chased by the cold autumn wind. In haste to arrive at a lodging place, for night was approaching, I discovered at a turn in the road the village of —, hidden in its solitary valley like a bird's nest in a furrow. The church bell was uttering its funeral note, and grave diggers were waiting in the cemetery the last prayer of the old pastor to lower the coffin into the earth. I joined several men on the road who were coming slowly back from the procession, and I walked behind and listened to their conversation.—“Our old friend Franz sleeps the sleep of the just,” said one of them. “May God allow us to do so likewise,” added another. I learned from these worthy people that the dead

man's name was Franz Bickert, an old painter who had finished his career alone, in a little gothic manor house in ruins, which was pointed out to me on the summit of a neighboring hill. The pastor took me to visit this little castle, which the worthy Bickert had given to the village to become, after his death, an open asylum to several poor and infirm inhabitants. The walls on the ground floor were covered with fresco paintings, reproducing in various ways a demon watching a young girl asleep. We found in the corner of a chest covered with mould, several sheets of paper which appeared to have been taken from a manuscript and scattered by chance. I picked them up mechanically; they contained short notes, phrases without beginning or end, out of which I succeeded in decyphering the end of Maria's story.

On a certain night, old baron H—— was going to his chamber leaning on the arm of his old friend Franz Bickert. Near the middle of the gallery, they perceived a white figure carrying a night lamp, which appeared to come out of Maria's apartment. The baron frightened, exclaimed:—"That is the major! Franz, that is the Danish major!——"

The figure had vanished, no sound had been heard. The baron uneasily entered his daughter's room; she was beautifully and calmly reposing like an angel from heaven; a sweet smile was upon her lips. Hippolyt had returned from the wars. The marriage was to take place on the morrow, and near the beautiful girl who slept, the wedding garments already prepared were lying upon the sofa.

On the morrow the bride and bridegroom went to the church; but at the moment of kneeling at the foot of the altar, Maria fell—She was dead!—The magnetizer had devoured her soul.

All those who had loved her soon followed her into the tomb.

Nothing was known of what became of doctor Alban.

THE AGATE HEART.

*Das Reutlinger Herz (Nachtstück
in Cellot's manier II. Heft, Neutal vol. VIII)*

QUITE near the city of G——, coming from the south, may be seen a castle in the style of the middle age, which seems like a stone giant, to watch the road through the openings in a wood of pines that surrounds it. Behind this residence, is spread out a grand park all covered with shade and mystery. The solitude which reigns in the castle strikes a chill to your heart like the air from a tomb; and it is with difficulty that the old porter deigns to inform the curious traveller that this was the residence of the late counsellor of state Reutlinger.

The interior decoration of the castle recalls the paintings, arabesques, and all the strange caprices of the French artists of the time of Louis XIV. This fashion has even presided over the arrangement of the gardens, filled with artificial grottoes, suspended bridges, and currents of running water spread out in limpid streams on symmetrically cut lawns. At the end of the gardens, in a bower of weeping willows with untrimmed branches, rises a small Silesian marble monument, and in the middle of this kind of mourning piece is incrustated an agate heart veined with red lines. It might have been called a bleeding heart. On examining it nearer, these words engraved on the agate may be read; "Repose in peace!" Long before this inscription was engraved, and if my memory is good, the eighth day of September, in the year 180—, a man and a woman already far advanced in life contemplated this little monument.

"My dear counsellor," said the old lady, "by what singular fancy have you been led to erect this mournful little tent under which, you say, your poor heart must repose some day in this agate covering?"

"Hush!" said the counsellor, pressing his companion's arm; "call my conduct fancy, mania, singularity; but remember that I have suffered much to arrive at the point of only finding repose near this image of death! Even you to whom I speak, oh Julia! Julia, do you not remember that you have caused me a cruel grief at the time when our hearts, both young, might have poured into each other so many flowers of hope, and such sweet fruits of love?"

At these words, the counsellor and the old lady exchanged a look full of emotion.—"It was not I, it was you yourself, Max, that was to blame," replied she. "If you had not remained so obstinately a fatalist, if you had not incessantly sought to create around you a thousand causes of inexpressible torment to heart and spirit, I should not have been forced to entrust my future peace to a man of less brilliancy than yourself, but who was endowed with peaceful qualities. Oh! Max, do not reproach me with not having sufficiently loved you! It was you alone, I repeat, who created your own grievances."

"It is true," said the counsellor, after a momentary silence. "I am forced to confess that my poor heart is incapable of affectionate outpourings; the imagination which controls it has dried up its fibres. No being can love me, for there is no longer anything sweet and sympathizing in me. Devotedness would wreck itself against my existence, as it would exhaust itself against this heart of stone!"

"And why this bitterness which excites you against yourself?" replied the old lady. "You who do good to all around you, and know how to administer consolation to the sufferings of others, how is it that you find no balm for your own afflictions? how is it that you unceasingly distrust your friends?"

"Ah!" exclaimed the counsellor, striking his forehead, "it is because it has pleased God to give me a *second sight* which pierces the future, which guesses the dangers, and which only assists me to foretell them at the price of continual anxiety! I believe that there is always near us an occult power opposed to our happiness, which seems wholly occupied in seducing and drawing us towards evils that cannot be remedied. I suffer and I wrestle, I am unhappy in the midst of my apparent happiness, as if I bore upon my forehead the mark of a Cain!"

"The same reflections still!" said the lady, sighing deeply. —"But, tell me, dear counsellor, tell me, to change this lugubrious conversation, what has become of that young and charming child, the son of your younger brother, whom you received several years ago, with evidences of truly paternal affection?"

"I have driven him away," cried the counsellor; "he was a monster!"

"A monster! you do not mean it; a child six years old!"

"Yes," replied the counsellor; "you know the history of that brother of whom you speak; I have told you more than once the infamous tricks he has played upon me, and all the evil he has tried to do me in exchange for my many services. You know how it was that, plunged into extreme misery, thanks to his misconduct, he outwardly feigned towards me the most hypocritical actions, to make me believe in his repentance and gain my support! You know how he profited by his residence in my house to gain possession of certain documents——But it is useless to fatigue you with these details. The infamous man disappeared one day, to withdraw himself from the effects of my just resentment. I took charge of this child whom he had abandoned, and I only thought of preparing for his future a tranquil and honest destiny, when fate gave me notice in time to allow me to shake off this serpent that I was warming in my bosom."

"Nonsense," said the lady, "that was still another dream of your restless

“ You shall judge for yourself,” continued the counsellor. “ My mind, harassed by grief that nothing could soften, I had conceived the sad thought of having erected in this garden the monument that you now behold, and under which I wished my heart to repose when I should be no more. Well, one day when I had come to visit the workmen, I perceived this accursed child, who was named Max, like myself, playing with this agate heart, which he used like a ball in the game of ninepins. A sombre terror froze my soul. I saw in the childish act the presage of evils that he might cause me some day, and to cut short our relations, which no longer offered anything but distrust and danger, I ordered my steward to rid me of the presence of this little rascal. I know that he is in a safe place, but I will never consent to see him again during my life.”

“ What hard heartedness ! what foolish vengeance for an imaginary wrong ! ” exclaimed the lady.—“ Do not vex yourself, Julia,” said the counsellor, bowing, “ the blows of fate are of more importance than the imprudent sensibility of your sex.” At these words the privy counsellor Reutlinger offered his hand to madame Foerd, and conducted her from the garden. A short time after this there was gathered within castle Ruetlinger a brilliant company invited to a triennial feast which the counsellor called the good old times festival. All the guests were expected to present themselves in the fashionable costume of the year 1760, with wigs extravagantly cued, laced coats, hooped dresses, and bird of paradise curls. It was a kind of carnival, the sight of which was very piquant.

Two young men, Ernest and Willibald, met in a distant walk in the garden. They looked at each other from head to foot, then burst into a loud laugh, as the result of the scrutiny of their respective physiognomies, under the accoutrement which they had borrowed from the counsellor’s wardrobe.

“ By my faith,” said Willibald, who first regained his seriousness, “ this worthy Ruetlinger’s idea is not entirely with-

out sense. Look and see if those beautiful ladies are not adorably coquettish under their feathers, which make them look like stage duchesses. It is enough under these wigs to make us improvise all the gallantries of the Pompadour school, so furiously popular in France. But see how charming that young girl is ; that is Julia, madame Foerd's daughter. I know not what restrains me from making a flaming declaration to her, in a style at once ambiguous and delicate. I should say to her :—" Oh, dear friend ! water which wears away marble in falling drop by drop,—the anvil which hardens as it receives the often repeated blows of the hammer,—the rays of the sun which——"

" Ah ! may the devil take thee," interrupted Ernest ; " thanks to thy extravagances, the beautiful Julia who was coming towards us, ran away at the sight of thee like a frightened gazelle. There is no doubt now that she imagines that we are passing our time in laughing at the ladies in general, and at herself in particular. She will go and put us under the ban of all feminine society ! "

" Bah ! " exclaimed Willibald, " it is well known that I have the reputation of an impudent coxcomb, and the young ladies are as wary of me as they would be of a dangerous demon ; but, self-praise aside, I know the roads that lead to the heart in spite of all obstacles, and I have sure means of bringing people to me when I do not wish to make advances. Let us yield ourselves to joy, and let us congratulate our friend Reutlinger, whom I see coming this way in all his pomp and pride. "

Thus chatting, the two friends proceeded to a lawn in front of the castle. A dozen persons, tired of the ceremony of acting parts that afforded them very little amusement, had hung their hats and wigs on the branches of some elder bushes, and were playing a game at tennis, which the grave counsellor himself had not refused to join. The players were suddenly interrupted in the game by a musical charivari ; each one hastily resumed his wig and laced coat.—" What have we now ? "

said Ernest.—“That is a pretty question !” exclaimed Willibald. “I lay a wager that it is the arrival of the Turkish ambassador ; it is thus they call, if you do not know it, the baron Exter, the funniest original who has ever, in the memory of man, walked under the heavenly vault. He was formerly ambassador to Constantinople, and to believe his own story, he has enacted in that country all the adventures, all the illusions of the *Thousand and one Nights*. He goes so far as to vaunt himself upon possessing the marvellous secrets of the great king Solomon, the patron of the charlatans who call themselves magicians. This baron Exter affects mystical actions which produce great effect upon simple people ; and thanks to his grimaces he has gained great ascendancy over counsellor Reutlinger. Both are furious enthusiasts in the doctrines of Mesmer, and I present them to thee as visionaries such as are seldom seen.”

Willibald had hardly finished this panegyric, when the ex-Turkish ambassador entered the garden. He was a kind of rotund little man dressed in the oriental costume, with the exception of an enormous wig, powdered and curled, and a pair of furred boots which he wore from private considerations of health. The people who accompanied him playing the lute and tambourine, were no less than his major domo and three or four of his upper servants, all greased with a thick coat of black coloring matter, which gave them the appearance of Africans, and dressed in pointed caps like those worn by Spanish penitents.

The baron Exter leaned on the arm of an old officer who appeared to have been resuscitated from the seven years' war. This was general Rixendorf, military authority in the city of G——, who had muffled himself for this day's solemnity in his old uniform covered with gold lace.—“Salama Milek,” said the counsellor to baron Exter, coming to meet him with open arms. The baron took his turban off to return the salutation of his worthy host and friend. At the same time something brilliant like a mannikin covered with gilded spangles,

moved from behind a large cherry tree ; this object represented the commercial counsellor Harscher in his official court dress.

He made his way through the assistants to come and offer his salutations to the Turkish ambassador, of whom he was one of the most enthusiastic admirers. This personage had resided in Italy during his youth, and he had come back with a musical mania, which rendered still more ridiculous his trembling falsetto, which he pretended to think was as capable of executing trills as master Farinelli's throat.

"I will lay a wager," said Ernest to his friend, "that Mr. Harscher has stuffed his pockets with cherries to offer to the ladies ; but as the said pockets are lined with Spanish tobacco, I doubt if his odoriferous gallantries will meet with a cordial welcome."

The ambassador was received with great attention. The pretty Julia Foerd approached to kiss the general's hand with filial affection ; but the ambassador immediately embraced her, kissing her on both cheeks, without being aware that by his sudden movement he was crushing counsellor Harscher's toes, who uttered the most painfully comical cries. Baron Exter drew the young girl aside, and began to chat with her, animating his conversation with the most impatient gestures.

"That joker is full of the evil one then ?" said Ernest to his friend.—"I believe so," answered Willibald, "for although he is the young girl's god-father, I know that he has a hankering after her, and it might be that he has dangerous designs upon her."

Suddenly the ambassador stopped short in his conversation, extending his right hand before him, and cried out in his loudest voice : "Fetch it !"—"Good," said Willibald, "this babbler is telling for the thousandth time his story of the sea-dog. Now, you must know that the baron Exter occupied in Turkey a lofty marble palace on the shores of the Bosphorus. One day when he was walking in the gallery, he heard a piercing cry, he looked and saw by the water's side a Turkish

woman whose little child had just been siezed by a large sea-dog. The poor mother in despair wrung her hands and wept. Exter ran to the beach, walked into the water until it reached his knees, threw out his arm and cried out :—" Fetch it ! " The sea-dog immediately reappeared holding his prey in his mouth, and laid the child safe and sound at the feet of the enchanter ; then plunged back into the waves, and Exter majestically entered his palace, without giving the good woman time to thank him."

Ernest received this tale with a homeric laugh.

"That is not all," added Willibald, who was desirous of telling the whole story. "Baron Exter, not content with this noble action, having learned that the mother of the child was the wife of a poor workman, who had been long disabled, sent her a considerable sum of money. The woman, in gratitude for so many benefits, came and begged of him to accept as a mark of her esteem a little sapphire ring which she wore upon her finger. Exter, believing this gift of very little value, only accepted it in order not to offend by his refusal the woman who so anxiously urged it upon him ; but what was his joy when, shortly after, he examined this ring, he decyphered, thanks to his scientific knowledge, Arabic characters whose interpretation apprised him that he was the fortunate possessor of the magic ring which the great Ali used to call the doves of Mahomet, with whom he often had conversations in the language of the other world."

"Here are certainly great marvels," said Ernest, "but let us go and find out what is going on down there in that circle, where the curious are standing on tip-toe to see something that is probably very interesting."

On approaching the group, the two friends distinguished in the midst of it a little woman who looked like a Bohemian, four feet high at most, with a head like a pumpkin, and who was jumping and turning about with a strange velocity, singing in a nasal tone ; "Guide your fold, shepherdess !"

"Wouldst thou believe," said Willibald, "that this shortened

being is the sister of the beautiful Julia Foerd? What a mystification of nature!"

This spectacle was sad and ridiculous; the two friends left it in order not to spoil their joy by reflections too philosophical; besides, the prelude to the concert called them to another part of the garden. Reutlinger had taken a violin on which he very skilfully played a sonata from Corelli, with an accompaniment on the harpsichord by general Rixendorf, and another instrument by master Harscher. Then madame Foerd sang an Italian romance by Anfossi, in the midst of which the door of the pavilion in which the concert was going on was suddenly opened. A good looking young man made his way through the audience, and, falling at the feet of general Rixendorf, exclaimed in a broken voice:—"Oh! general, I owe you my safety! how can I ever repay you?" The general appeared to be very much embarrassed by this scene; he raised the young man, drew him quickly behind a hedge, and tried to calm his excitement. Everybody's curiosity was very much excited by this adventure; they had all recognized the young man as counsellor Foerd's secretary, and every eye was turned inquiringly towards him; but he was gravely taking a pinch of snuff, and talking French with his lady. Meanwhile the Turkish ambassador could not restrain his curiosity, and having asked for an explanation, the counsellor contented himself with replying that he could not guess what had inspired young Max with the idea of offering this affront.

Then, to avoid further questioning, he left the pavilion, and Willibald immediately followed after him.

The Foerd family was composed of three young ladies, who did not imitate the indifference of their father. The ugly Nanette agitated her fan and accused the young man of incivility. Julia had retired into a corner, where she seemed to avoid observation and hide her blushes. As for miss Clementine, she was talking sentiment with a young and handsome nobleman, who seemed to listen to her whilst eyeing

the refreshments that were being brought by a servant.—Willibald reëntered; all the guests pressed around him, stretching out their necks and multiplying all the monosyllables which constitute a question. Ernest's friend, whilst answering that he knew nothing about it, assumed a cunning look, as much as to say—"I have found out all about it." Finally, as he was closely pressed, "Gentlemen," said he, "if you absolutely require that I confide this secret to you in public, allow me before doing so to put two or three important questions to the company. Young Max, counsellor Foerd's secretary, has he not always appeared to you endowed with many brilliant qualities?"

"Without any doubt," exclaimed the ladies unanimously. "His studiousness, his laborious assiduity are they not notable?"

"Agreed!" said the men.—"Is he not finally what is called a promising young man, of good social qualities, and of the happiest character?" There was but one cry of affirmation.—"Well then, listen," continued Willibald. "A short time ago a young master tailor was celebrating his betrothal. John, the favorite servant of counsellor Foerd, was looking through the windows at what was passing in the ball room.—Suddenly he perceived Henrietta, a young girl whom he loved. Beside himself with love and jealousy, he ran home, put on his best livery, and presented himself at the ball room door. They did not refuse to allow him to enter, but they imposed this cruel condition upon him, that any journeyman tailor should have the right to invite before him any lady that he might choose to dance with, which obliged the poor devil to content himself with ladies that no one cared about. Henrietta was invited and accepted; John, in a rage, knocked her partner down and beat a number of the dancers who tried to put him out; but he was obliged to yield to force, for they all united to throw him out of doors. Max was passing by in the street at this moment, and delivered John from the police who had been attracted by the noise, and were about

to drag him to prison. But he could not succeed in calming the exasperation of the furious John, except by promising to exert himself to avenge his affront.

Now, this is what happened: Max the next day took a large sheet of paper, and with a small pencil brush and a little India ink he drew a magnificent goat. This goat appeared to be bringing into the world an infinity of little tailors armed with the tools of their trade, and scrambling as best they could, in the most grotesque positions. At the bottom of this caricature he wrote an inscription of rather loose character, which I should have some difficulty in remembering—

“Spare yourself the trouble!” exclaimed the ladies.

“I will go on then,” continued the jovial Willibald.—“Max gave his drawing to John. John ran and stuck it up on the door of the inn where the tailors go to take their meals. All the loafers in the neighborhood collected around it, and the tailors could no longer show themselves in the street without being saluted from all sides. They sought for the author of this criminal joke, which had very nearly occasioned a serious riot, and they talked of putting Max into prison for safe keeping. The poor secretary, after having vainly consulted twenty lawyers, went to the house of his protector, general Rixendorf.

The general received Max kindly, and said to him:—“My friend, you have done a foolish thing, but the caricature is excellent; there is something original and spontaneous in its composition, but the idea is not new, and that is what will save from all pursuit.” Saying this, the general searched an old portfolio, and drew from it an old tobacco pouch—on which the caricature of Max was almost wholly and exactly represented. Max took the tobacco pouch, and, by the advice of the general, went before the judges and thus spoke to them:—“Gentlemen, I never had the intention of offending the honorable corporation of tailors; my drawing is nothing but a copy, the original of which you will see on this old tobacco pouch which belongs to general Rixendorf. This work has

been stolen from me by some malicious individual, whom I regret not being acquainted with, as I consider that he merits punishment. Besides, I defy any one to allege the least motive that could have induced me to play this trick on the venerable corporation to which the plaintiffs belong." Now, as the former conduct of Max was found irreproachable, he was acquitted without costs. This is what caused so lately his joy and the expression of his gratitude.

All were not satisfied with this anecdote, which had the appearance of a crude mystification of Willibald's own invention. But counsellor Reutlinger having given the signal for the opening of the ball, the music from the orchestra drowned all conversation; each one placed himself so as to figure as advantageously as possible, and the adventure of Max was forgotten.

The following day was to see the amusements renewed.—But when the assembled guests only awaited the counsellor to commence the festival, cries of anguish were heard, and servants came from the garden, bearing poor Reutlinger in their arms: they had found him insensible not far from the sepulchral monument which he had constructed in the bower of weeping willows. They administered ether and the strongest restoratives to him without effect, for nothing seemed to reanimate him, when suddenly the Turkish ambassador cried out:—"Stop there, stop there, bunglers that you are! Let me manage this!" And immediately throwing his turban far away from him, together with his wig, he commenced making singular motions with his hands around the counsellor, approaching gradually nearer the region of the stomach; he then blew his breath in Reutlinger's face, who after ten minutes of this manipulation opened his eyes, and murmured in a feeble voice:—"Exter, why have you awakened me? an infernal power has revealed to me my near death, and I was perhaps about to pass from life without suffering."

"Pooh! pooh! thy hour has not yet come," said baron Exter; "drive away these foolish ideas; thou art surrounded

by joyful living beings, who will not allow you to quit this world without the sound of drums and trumpet."

"No," said Reutlinger, groaning, "no, my friend, I do not deceive myself concerning my position. I am sure that I am nearing my end, and that my days will terminate with some frightful misfortune."

"But," exclaimed general Rixendorf, pressing his hand, "what has happened? from whence come these terrors which nothing can justify?"

"Listen," answered the counsellor, wiping his pale forehead, which was bathed in a cold perspiration. "I was passing along just now towards the bower of weeping willows; it seemed to me, on approaching it, that a plaintive voice struck upon my ear. I advanced with emotion, and what did I perceive? I shudder with horror at the remembrance of it, I found myself before another myself! Yes, myself, as I appeared thirty years ago, clothed in the same dress that I wore on that day; that when I was about to end my desperate life by suicide, I saw my beloved Julia appear in all the brilliancy of a heavenly beauty. Well, a short time ago this scene was offered vividly to my eyes. An unnatural coldness pervaded my veins, and I fell to the earth insensible."

"What ghost story are you telling us?" exclaimed Rixendorf. "It must be, my poor friend, that your brain is very sick, to entertain such visions: try to vanquish these hallucinations, and amuse yourself; your soul is pegged into your body, and you are likely, in spite of your fits of hypochondria, to bury us all. Besides, I will explain to you in a moment the little reality there is in the dream which has so strongly moved you." Saying these words, the general went out of the room as fast as his old legs would allow. The Turkish ambassador approached Reutlinger and said:—"The dear old general does not believe in the power of the magnetic fluid; he is an obstinate materialist; but we know, you and I, what to think on the subject of apparitions."

Counsellor Foerd's wife soon came in, escorted by her hus-

band and Miss Julia. The counsellor Reutlinger then arose from his chair, with the assurance that he felt perfectly restored. As the company were about quitting the saloon to take a walk, the door opened, and Rixendorf appeared, accompanied by young Max in military costume. Reutlinger, at the sight of him, was seized with a nervous shuddering.—“There is thy trouble and thy resemblance, my old friend,” said Rixendorf, pushing Max into the counsellor’s arm. “It is Max whom thou hast met in the bower, clothed in a costume from thy wardrobe, under which I wished him to reënter this castle, where his early childhood was passed. Oh, obdurate and pitiless uncle, who has chased from thy fireside, under the influence of an accursed superstition, thy brother’s son, I now give back to thee in the place of the child whom thou hatest, an accomplished young man, ready to love thee like a son. Come, let this heart yield for once to the sweet sentiments of life ; banish the phantoms which possess thy brain, in order to see life under consoling aspects. Nothing but *love* can render us happy here below ! ”

Reutlinger was under the influence of a nervous crisis ; his features changed, and his lips seemed to breathe away what life remained in him ; his wandering eyes were fixed by turns on Max and Rixendorf with an indefinable expression of anger. At a sign from the general, Max spoke :—“ Dear uncle,” said he, “ have you not repulsed me long enough from your bosom ? Will you condemn me to bear until death the weight of the aversion that you had conceived for my unfortunate father ? If he was ungrateful to you, his sufferings have well avenged you. I saw him expire on a bed of misery ; with his last breath he spoke to me of you, and supplicated me to reconcile you to his memory by becoming your son, the most tender and devoted prop of your age. Do not reject his last desire ; have not a heart of stone, for God would curse you for it ! ”

Max fell at the counsellor’s feet, and Julia Foerd knelt at the same time and covered his hands with tears and kisses.

The secret of the love existing between these two young people was then known for the first time. This touching spectacle softened Reutlinger; he sobbed aloud; then a torrent of tears eased his overcharged breast.—“Powers of heaven,” exclaimed he, “holy affections whose teachings I have despised, you come to save me, you pluck me from the influence of invisible spirits, who were torturing and showing me unceasingly an abyss opening at my feet! Be blessed for the change which is taking place in me, for the relief that you bring me, promising the cure of the wounds in my heart. And thou, Max, my nephew,—my adopted son, and you Julia, you whom he loves, and who love him, press me to your loving hearts, so that I may no longer live except by your affection!”

All present were filled with emotion. Madame Foerd thought that she was dreaming; she no longer recognized the Reutlinger of former days. The marriage of Max and her daughter gave her great joy. President Foerd exhausted his snuff-box with visible satisfaction. Julia's sisters were sought for to learn the news of this event; the other guests were about to congratulate the young couple on their approaching happiness, when the Turkish ambassador stepped before them, took Max by the hand and said to him:—“Not so fast! Marriage ought to be the result of experience, and in spite of thy talents thou art at the commencement of youth as yet. You thrust your feet into trouble, you make caricatures, and you are not acquainted with the usages of society, in the midst of which you aspire to create a new family.—Your education, my boy, must be finished by travel. So then, if you please, be off to Constantinople; you will learn in that country many things that it is useful to know, and then you will be worthy and capable of marrying my pretty god-daughter.”

The company exclaimed loudly against the advice given by baron Exter; but he having taken his friend Reutlinger aside, and whispered a few Arabic words in his ear, a decision was immediately given.

“ Go to Constantinople, my dear nephew ; do me this favor, for which I shall be infinitely grateful ; and at your return in six months, the wedding shall take place ! ”

Julia put on a very captivating little pout ; but it was necessary, in spite of all, that Max should pack up his trunks, that he should go and visit the marble palaces on the Bosphorus, and perhaps many other places not less interesting.

Six months after this, the affianced lovers were married, but they wept in the willow bower ; for counsellor Reutlinger had died of grief. His stony heart had broken, and on the agate heart placed in his monument, Max caused to be engraved these words :—“ *Repose in peace now and ever more !* ”

THE MYSTERY OF THE DESERTED HOUSE.

Das öde Haus. (Nachtstücke

in Callot's manier II theil, Hempel's vol. VIII

The aspect of the numerous and brilliant edifices of V——, the luxury resulting from the many products of art and industry of all kinds with which it is enriched from day to day, form the delight of the loiterer, and the marvel of all travellers. The street, lined with splendid habitations which lead to the gate of ——, serves for a promenade to the fashionable society who go to kill time by calling at each other's houses. The lower floor of the houses is occupied by elegant stores; the upper stories are divided into comfortable apartments. This is the fashionable quarter.

I had already travelled more than a thousand times up and down this promenade, when my eyes fell by chance on a building whose strange construction strongly contrasted with those in the neighborhood. Figure to yourself a square of stone wall, pierced with four windows forming a first and single story, the height of which exceeded but little the lower story of the magnificent hotels which flanked it on the right and left. This miserable building was covered with a still more miserable roof, and nearly all the broken glass was replaced by squares of gray or blue paper. The four windows were closed. Those that formerly composed the basement had been walled up, and at the door of the entrance, which was narrow, low and without lock, you would have sought in vain for the least sign of a bell. This ruined condition of the building announced complete desolation; this decayed structure had the appearance of having been abandoned for at

least a hundred years. A deserted house is not, after all, a very astonishing thing ; but in such a rich quarter, on land which might have yielded considerable revenue to the proprietor, there was certainly something in this to arouse the curiosity of an idler, and I could no longer pass before the shed without making a thousand conjectures concerning it.

One fine day, at the time when the fashionables crowded each other like ants in a hill, I was reflecting, whilst leaning against a portico which faced the deserted house ; a man whom I had not seen for a long time suddenly came to a stop near me, and drew me from my revery. It was count P——, a day dreamer as singular at least as I was myself. He had reflected, like myself, enormously concerning the deserted house. His suppositions had exceeded my own, and he had succeeded in creating for himself thereupon so extravagant a story, that the boldest imagination could hardly admit the reality of it. But judge of the disappointment of the poor count, when, after having brought his story to a startling end, and in the most tragical fashion, he learned that the famous deserted house was simply the work-room of a fashionable confectioner, whose store was next to it. The windows of the basement had been walled-up to hide from the sight of the passers-by the furnaces and pans ; and the windows of the first story had been stopped with paper, to preserve from the rays of the sun and the insects the manufactured sweet-meats which were stored there. This accursed information produced the effect of a cold douche bath upon me ; it was no longer possible to dream about it, there was no longer any poetry in it ! it was enough to make a sensible heart and a vivid imagination burst with rage. Nevertheless, in spite of the matter of fact explanation that I had received, I could not refrain from looking at the deserted house with an inexplicable dizziness that made me shudder. My astonished mind angrily rejected this idea of confections taking the place of the phantoms which had so powerfully occupied me ; and I did not despair of seeing some day the fantastic world again

take possession of this habitation. Chance, besides, was again to throw me in the way of conjecture.

Several days after meeting with count P——, passing at midday before the deserted house, I saw a green taffety curtain, which covered the window nearest the confectioner's shop, move softly. A white and delicately formed hand, the prettiest finger of which bore a superb diamond ring, stole gently behind the curtain : I then saw an alabaster arm, ornamented with a golden bracelet, follow it. The hand placed a crystal flask on the window sill, and was withdrawn.

I remained there with my eyes fixed, my nose in the air, and my feet glued to the pavement, making, you can believe, such a funny figure, that in less than ten minutes a crowd of idlers, of the upper class, closed round me, stretching open their eyes to look the same way ; but there was no longer a rosy hand, or alabaster arm ; the curious people got nothing by their impertinence, and I said to myself, whilst making my escape, that city people resemble, from little to great, the simpletons of a certain town who gathered one morning before a house, crying out *a miracle*, because a cotton night cap had fallen from the sixth story without breaking a single stitch. There was a thousand chances that the rosy hand and the alabaster arm legitimately belonged to the wife, the sister or the daughter of the confectioner, and that the crystal flask prosaically contained a measure of gooseberry syrup. But see how a restless mind, well balanced, knows how to arrive at its object by the shortest way ! The idea came into my head to go into the confectioner's shop to adroitly draw some information from him. So that, whilst taking a chocolate sherbet :—" Sir," said I to him, " you have chosen a fine place for your establishment, and I find it very handy for you to have the neighboring house in which you have placed your manufactory."—At these words the honest tradesman looked at me in surprise.

" Who in the devil's name could have told you," exclaimed he, " that the neighboring house was at my service ? I should

like it, certainly, above all things ; but in spite of all my manoeuvres, the business is not concluded. Besides, after due reflection, I am not much disappointed, for a thousand extraordinary things must take place in this house, which would singularly annoy a tenant who is fond of quiet."

God knows, dear reader, how my curiosity was roused by these words. I tried to make the man communicative ; but all that I could learn from him, by questions, was, that the deserted house formerly belonged to the countess S——, who now lived on her estates, and had not been seen at this residence for several years. The house bore, besides, from time almost immemorial, the same appearance that it now did, and no one appeared to care to make the least repair to preserve it from impending ruin. Two lone beings inhabited it ; an old servant and a disabled dog who barked incessantly. The people in the neighborhood were convinced that this old ruin was haunted by ghosts ; for at certain times, and above all at the approach of Christmas, strange noises were heard to trouble the silence of the night ; sometimes the uproar arose to a stunning discordance. On one single occasion the cracked voice of an old woman had tried to yelp a kind of song from the other world, in which was distinguished some French monosyllables mixed with an unknown language.

"Here sir," said the confectioner to me, leading me into his back shop, "look at this iron funnel which comes through the partition wall ; I have sometimes seen, in the middle of summer, a tremendous smoke come out of it, as if they were making some hellish fire in the dilapidated house. I have more than once scolded the old servant, and told him that there was danger of a conflagration ; but the sullen fellow pretends that it is the fire in his kitchen. Now, the devil alone knows what this being eats, for the smoke that comes from his cavern sometimes diffuses an odor which is very uninviting."

At this instant, the shop door opening, agitated a little sharp sounding bell. The confectioner excused himself for

the purpose of waiting upon his customer; and as I followed him, I recognized, by a sign from the confectioner, the person of whom we had just been speaking. Figure to yourself, dear reader, a little dried up man with a yellow parchment skin, a pointed nose, thin lips, green eyes, a simple smile, powdered hair in the form of a pyramid; his costume was composed of a long thread-bare coat, the color of which had formerly imitated burnt coffee; his close fitting breeches, were buttoned down over gray stockings, and his feet were encased in square toed shoes with pinchbeck buckles. From the sleeves of his coat appeared two robust fists, which hardly accorded with a thin and whining voice that asked for preserved oranges, sugared chestnuts, sponge cakes and other delicacies. The confectioner hastened to wait upon him, and the old man drew from his pocket a well worn leather purse, from which he drew forth one by one some pieces of smooth change, which were hardly current. He paid grudgingly, murmuring broken and unmeaning phrases.

"Are you ill, my dear neighbor?" said the confectioner, "you appear to be quite melancholy: it is age, is it not? it is age——"

"Ho, ho! ho, ho! ho, ho! who says that?" angrily growled the satanic old man, making such a clumsy pirouette, that in turning he very nearly crushed the paws of the little black dog that accompanied him, and made the store windows tremble in their frames, whilst the dog uttered piercing cries. "Accursed beast!" said the old man, opening his bag of sweetmeats to throw a cake to the cur, who was silenced by his gluttony, and stood upon his hind legs with the grace of a squirrel.

"Good night, neighbor," said the old servant, after the dog had finished his pittance, "good night, neighbor; the poor old man broken by age wishes you good luck and a long life!"

Saying this, he squeezed the confectioner's hand in his long claw, so rudely that the man of sweets uttered a cry of pain.

"You see, sir," said the confectioner, after the departure of his customer, "this is the factotum of count S——, and the guardian of the deserted house. I give him notice from time to time to quit his nightly disturbances; but he has a reply to everything; he is awaiting, he says, his master's family, and that for so many years, that I am led to believe that they will never arrive. I know nothing more about it, and I have the honor to salute you, for this is the time that the fine ladies besiege my store, and dispute about the sweets that I invent every day for their pretty little mouths."

On leaving the confectioner I sought, in my own mind, for some natural connection between the sad and singular song which had been heard from the deserted house, and the beautiful arm that I had caught sight of under the curtain, and I persuaded myself that, by an acoustic illusion, the confectioner had taken for the squalling of an old woman, the mild, but plaintive song of a beautiful creature, persecuted and held captive by some odious tyrant. I thought again of the disagreeable smoke that came from the funnel, of the crystal flask that had figured on the window sill, and I came to a conclusion, without farther reflection, that the beautiful unknown who had existed in my imagination, was the victim of an abominable sorcery. The old servant changed in my eyes into a disagreeable magician; my brain became exalted, and diabolical figures besieged my waking hours. By unutterable enchantment, the alabaster arm became united in my thoughts with a snowy shoulder that my eyes really perceived; then the adorable figure of a young girl veiled in white joined itself to this kind of hallucination, and it seemed to me that silvery mist, which half concealed from me the features of this beautiful angel, escaped in endless clouds from the crystal flask. To form, for the deliverance of this celestial being, the most extravagant projects, was for my delirious thoughts the work of a moment; and I uttered aloud the most chivalric exclamations, when it seemed to me that a skeleton hand patted me on the shoulder, broke into a thousand pieces the crystal flask, and the apparition vanished, leaving behind it the dying echo of a mournful plaint.

The following day, I went early and posted myself in front of the deserted house. Blinds had been added to the windows since the night before. The house looked like a tomb. I rambled about in the vicinity the whole of that day; when night came I passed by it again; the little door without lock was half open, the man in the coffee colored coat was looking

out. I made bold to speak to him,—“Does not Binder, the counsellor of the treasury, live in this house?” said I to him politely.

“No,” answered the old man with a suspicious smile; “he has never set foot in it; he will never come into it; and, what is more, everybody knows that he lives far away from this quarter of the city.”

Saying these words, he drew back his head and shut the door in my face. I heard him cough, then go slowly away, the sound of footsteps being accompanied by the rattling of keys, and it seemed to me that he descended into the interior by a staircase. I had observed through the half opened door that the entry was draped in old ragged tapestry, and furnished with antique arm chairs, covered with scarlet cloth.

On the morrow, towards noon, an irresistible power carried me back to the same spot. I saw, or thought I saw, through the first story window, the green taffety curtain partly raised; then the glittering of a diamond, then the whole figure of a beautiful person, leaning against the sash, held out her arms towards me in a supplicating manner. Not knowing whether I was awake, or this a dream, I sought for a place where, without attracting the attention of the crowd, I could continue my observations. There was a stone bench on the other side of the street, exactly in front of the house; I went and seated myself upon it. I raised my eyes, I looked again; it was really she, it was the beautiful young girl so deeply fixed in my imagination; she stood quite still, and her absent look was not fixed upon me. I was tempted to believe that my senses were abused by a beautiful painting. Suddenly a toy pedlar came towards me, and begged me to buy something of him to bring him luck, for he had not sold anything since the morning. I angrily repulsed him at first; but he insisted, and spread out his wares before me; he offered me a little pocket mirror which he held before me at a certain distance, and in such a manner that I saw reflected in it, with exquisite clearness, the window of the deserted house and the angelic figure of the young girl. This object so strongly tempted me, that I immediately bought it without disputing the price. But I had hardly begun to make use of it myself, when it seemed to me that a kind of magnetism drew my eyes towards the mirror, and deprived me of the power of turning away from it; I suddenly imagine that I see the beautiful eyes of my divine unknown interpose themselves between the glass and my own; a sentiment of inexpressible tenderness warms my heart and makes it palpitate within me.

"You have a charming pocket mirror there," said a voice quite near me. I awake as if from a dream, and great is my surprise to find myself surrounded by a circle of people with whom I am unacquainted, and who smile upon me in an equivocal manner, as if they were looking upon a madman. Finally the same voice repeats:—"You have a very marvellous mirror there; but might I ask what so strongly draws your attention?"

The individual who addressed this question to me appeared to be a very respectable man, dressed with elegant simplicity; his mild and civil manner provoked my confidence; I could not refrain from avowing to him without reservation all that I felt, and I asked him if he had himself observed this admirable figure.

"Sir," said he to me, "I think that I have good eyes, and God preserve me from using spectacles as long as possible. I have seen, as you have done, the figure of which you speak, but I think that it is a portrait painted in oil and executed by an excellent artist."

I hastily looked again, but the curtain had fallen and covered the window.

"Sir," added the gentleman, "the old servant of count S——, to whom this barrack belongs, has just taken down the portrait to wipe the dust from it, and then shut the window."

"Are you sure of it?" exclaimed I in consternation.

"As of my life," exclaimed he; "on looking at the object in your mirror, you have been misled by an optical illusion; and I myself, when I was of your age and had your ardent imagination, I myself might have been deceived by it."

"But I saw the hand and arm move!" exclaimed I, falling back into a state of petrification difficult to describe.

"I cannot contradict you," said the man, with a smile on his face, rising: and, fixing a look of ironical politeness upon me, he left me, adding:—"Beware of mirrors manufactured by the devil. I have the honor to salute you."

Can you understand, dear reader, what I must have suffered at finding myself thus mystified and treated like a foolish visionary? Filled with shame and anger, I hastened to shut myself up in my own house, fully decided upon forgetting the deserted house and my absurd flights of imagination.

Some business that I had to transact occupied several days, and this helped to cool my brain. Only that, during the night, I still felt at intervals, feverish excitement; but I resisted it without much difficulty, and I had even succeeded

in adapting to common use the mirror that had so bewildered me, when one morning, as I was about to make use of it at my toilet, the glass appeared to me to be tarnished ; I breathed upon it and then wiped it, when I tried it again—I shudder still at the remembrance of it ! I saw in the place of my own face that of the mysterious unknown of the deserted house. Her eyes were moistened with tears, and fixed upon me with a more harrowing expression than at first.

The sensation I then experienced was so violent that every day after I did nothing but pass and repass before the deserted house. The image of the marvellous young girl had taken possession of all my thoughts ; I no longer lived but for the phantom, and I began to feel that physical sensations were establishing themselves between this being and myself, of an unknown nature. I fell gradually into a state of languor which was undermining my life ; it was a mixture of pain and pleasure which exhausted me without allowing me to oppose this supernatural influence. Fearing that I should become mad, and having hardly strength enough to drag myself along, I went with great exertion to the house of a physician, celebrated for his knowledge of the treatment for the prevention of mental maladies ; I related to him all that had happened to me since a certain time, and I begged him not to abandon me to a state of mind worse than death.

“Tranquillize yourself,” said the doctor ; “your mind is disordered, but as you know the cause of the trouble that occasions your suffering, it is already in good train for early restoration. Give me in the first place your mirror ; go back to your home ; undertake some labor that will absorb all your attention, and, after having courageously labored, fatigue yourself by a long walk ; then in the evening, see your friends and enjoy yourself with them. Add to this prescription a nourishing diet, and drink generous wines. Your illness proceeds solely from a fixed idea ; let us succeed in driving it away, and you will be radically cured.”

I hesitated about separating myself from the mirror. The doctor took it ; breathed upon it, wiped it and presented it to me, saying,—“Do you see anything now ?”

“I see my own features, nothing more,” answered I.

“That is well,” said the doctor ; “now commence yourself the same experiment.”

A cry escaped from my lips, and I became very pale. “It is she ! it is she !” exclaimed I. The doctor took back the mirror :

“As for myself,” said he, “I see nothing of the kind,

absolutely nothing ; but I must confess that the moment I looked I felt an involuntary shudder. Have full confidence in me, then. If there is a charm, it must be broken. Have the kindness to try it again."

I breathed again on the mirror, whilst the doctor placed his hand on my back bone. The figure appeared again, and the doctor grew pale on observing the effect that this phenomenon produced upon my organization. He took the mirror away from me, shut it up in a box, and dismissed me, after repeating the advice that he had given me, adding that we should see by and by what was to be done.

From that day, I gave myself up to a multitude of distractions, and I led a noisy life, fit to relieve my mind by physical fatigue. Sometime after this, I found myself one evening in very jovial company ; a conversation turned upon the occult sciences, magnetic experiments, and there was related on this subject the most surprising anecdotes. All the gathered experiences in relation to dreams, hallucinations, extacies, were passed in review, and it was finally seriously asked if it might not be that a will existed beyond our life, endowed in certain conditions with a real power over our faculties, a power which would have full exercise without any material contact.

"But," said one of the company, "to admit such a thesis would conduct as directly towards recognizing as truths the sorceries of the middle ages, and all the superstitions which an enlightened philosophy, improved by the progress of science, has long since consigned to oblivion."

"But," said a young physician, taking up the conversation, "must we, under pretence of wisdom and enlightened philosophy, deny the existence of established facts? Has not nature mysteries which our feeble organs fail to fathom and comprehend? And even as a blind man recognizes, by the rustling of leaves, by the murmur of the running waters, the neighborhood of a forest or a brook, can we not foresee certain things in existence, by the invisible communication, that certain minds have the gift of establishing with our own?"

At these words I entered the lists.—"You admit, then," said I to the young doctor, "the existence of an immaterial principle, endowed with a power which, under certain conditions, our will cannot repulse?"

"Yes," answered he, "it is a fact that is proved by experiments of serious men on persons subjected to magnetism."

"In that case," replied I, "you must also recognize as

possible the existence of demons, evil beings provided with qualities superior to our own?"

"That would be going too far," replied the doctor smilingly. "I do not believe in evil spirits. My opinion is only that there may exist in the chain of beings certain immaterial principles capable of exercising upon others an irresistible action. But I only found this idea upon simple observations, and I believe that organs feebly constituted or debilitated by some excess in life, are alone exposed to this kind of phenomenon."

"Sir," then said a middle aged man, who had not spoken before, "if there exists, as you partly allow, hidden powers opposed to our nature, I conclude, after some explanations, that these powers only existed by the feebleness of our minds. If imperfect organs or faculties, debilitated by excess or suffering, are alone subject to this physiological phenomenon, I conclude that it is nothing but the unhealthy tone of our minds, and consequently there does not exist aside from us powers endowed with real action, intermediate between God and ourselves. And now here is my own opinion, relative to mental maladies which burthen us with temporary hallucinations. I think that by the disturbance that it occasions in the more delicate fibres of our organization, the passion or love malady is the only affection of our souls which can produce disorders in our real life, and offer the example of a power exercised in an irresistible manner by one individual over another. I have made observations in my own house, the details of which would furnish material for a complete drama. At the time of the French invasion in our provinces, conducted by Bonaparte, I lodged in my house a colonel of the king of Naples' Guards; he was an officer of great distinction; but his features revealed the traces of a deep grief or recent illness. A few days after his arrival, I surprised him whilst giving way to paroxysms of grief which aroused my pity. He was suffocated by sobs that deprived him of the power of speech: and he was obliged to throw himself upon a couch, gradually his eyes lost their animation and his limbs became motionless; he was as rigid as a statue. From time to time he was convulsed, but had not the power of moving from his place. A physician whom I hastened to call, subjected him to magnetic influence, which appeared to occasion him some relief; but he was obliged to renounce it, for he felt that he could not restore the sick man without feeling within himself a sensation of acute suffering which he could not account for. Nevertheless, on recovering from his attack, the officer, whose confidence he had gained by his

care, told him that during the crisis he had seen the image of a woman whom he had known at Pisa, and that this woman had a look which pierced him to the heart, like the burning of a hot iron ; he only escaped from this singular pain to fall into a kind of lethargy, following which he felt the most intolerable headache, and a complete prostration of strength.— For the rest, he would never tell what had formerly passed between himself and the woman of Pisa. The order having been given to his regiment to march, he had his breakfast served whilst his baggage was being packed. But he had hardly carried his last glass of Madeira to his lips, when he fell down dead, uttering a stifled shriek. The physician thought that he had been struck with apoplexy. Two or three weeks after this accident, I received a letter addressed to the colonel. I opened it, in the hope of finding some information concerning the family of my guest : the letter came from Pisa, and only contained these words, without signature :—“ Poor friend, to-day, 7 J——, at noon, Antonia died, thinking that she was in your embrace ! ”

This was exactly the day and the hour of the colonel's death. Try and explain this to me. I cannot, dear reader, describe to you the fear that seized me on suddenly recognizing the analogy which existed between my own internal sensations and those experienced by the colonel. A cloud passed over my eyes ; a ringing in my ears, as mournful as a funeral bell, prevented me from hearing the end of the recital ; and, my imagination becoming suddenly exalted to delirium, I ran out of the room, to go to the deserted house. It seemed to me, from a distance, that I saw a light playing behind the closed blinds : but when I was quite near, it no longer appeared.— My hallucination increasing, I threw myself against the door ; it yielded, and I entered the vestibule, where I was suddenly choked by a warm and pungent vapor. Suddenly I heard a cry from a woman not two paces from me, and, I knew not how, I found myself in a saloon resplendent with light, and luxuriously decorated in the taste of the middle ages. Burning aromatics in censers embalmed the air with divine odors, which floated towards the vaulted ceiling in azure clouds.

“ Oh welcome, my betrothed ! for this is the hour of love ! ” said aloud the voice that I had already heard, and I then perceived for the first time a young woman in a bridal dress, who came towards me with open arms ; but when she came nearer, I saw that she had a face, yellow and frightfully wrinkled by madness. I started back in affright, but the woman continued to approach, and I thought that I then discovered that this ugly

face was nothing but a crape mask, under which appeared, with charming distinctness, the enchanting features of my ideal. Her hands already touched my own, when she fell groaning to the floor, and I heard muttered behind me:—“Ho, ho! to bed, to bed, your grace, or look out for the rod! and the gesture following the word, I perceived on turning round the old servant, the man in the coffee colored coat, who was flourishing through the air long birch rods, with which he commenced switching the poor woman weepingly extended on the floor. I threw myself before him and caught his arm; but he, shaking me off with more strength than I supposed him possessed of, contented himself with saying to me:—“Do you not see that had it not been for my interference, this mad woman would have strangled you? Go! go from here as quickly as you entered!”

At these words, I became dizzy again, and sprang out of the room, seeking for an opening to go out of this fatal house. I heard, when I had succeeded in getting outside, the mad woman's cries mingle with the noise of the blows which the old man unsparingly dealt her. I tried to go back to her assistance, but the ground gave away under my feet, I fell from step to step down a staircase which led to a chamber, the door of which was burst open in my fall. From the disordered bed, the coffee colored coat that hung over a chair, I guessed that it was the den in which the servant lodged. I had recovered myself, when I heard heavy steps descend the trembling stairs. It was the old man returning from his nocturnal adventure.

“Sir,” exclaimed he, throwing himself at my feet, “whoever you may be, keep, I conjure you, an absolute silence concerning all that you have seen here; the least indiscretion would ruin me, a poor old man who would no longer know where to gain a support for his declining years. The mad woman has been well punished, and I have securely tied her to her bed. All is now quiet. Go then yourself, and repose in your own home, my good sir! sleep well, and try to forget this night.”

A short time after this occurrence, I met count P—— in his saloon; he took me aside to tell me that he had discovered a clue to the mysteries of the deserted house. Supper, announced by a servant, did not allow me time to listen to the narration that he was about to favor me with. I offered my hand to a young lady to lead her into the supper room, the customary ceremonial in fashionable society. Judge of my surprise when, on fixing my eyes on her features, I recognized

the face of the ideal being presented by my magic mirror, when I wiped it after having breathed upon it. As I expressed the thought that I had met her before, she quietly answered that it was very unlikely, as she had just arrived at W—— for the first time in her life. She accompanied her answer with so charming a glance that I was electrified. We conversed together for some time; I introduced into our chat a certain boldness of expression which did not seem to displease her, and she, on her part, pursued it with charming animation.— When the champagne appeared, I attempted to fill her glass: but the crystal, accidentally struck, yielded a mournful sound. I saw the face of my pretty companion grow mortally pale, and it seemed to me that I had just heard the shrill voice of the mysterious old woman of the deserted house. In the course of the evening, I watched my opportunity to rejoin count P——. I learned from him that the beautiful person who had so exclusively occupied me was the countess Edwine de S——, and that the sister of this young girl's mother was confined as insane in the deserted house. That same day the mother and daughter had visited the unfortunate recluse.— The old servant had been suddenly attacked with a serious indisposition, and these ladies had admitted Dr. K—— into their sad secret, expecting from his great skill more decided efforts for the almost hopeless cure of the poor sick woman. At this moment Dr. K——, who was passing very near us, and whom I had consulted with as to the steps to be taken to drive away my hallucinations, stopped to inquire after my health, and I obtained from him, by my entreaties, some information concerning the history of the captive woman of the deserted house.

Angelika, countess of Z——, the doctor told us, was at thirty in all the brilliancy of her charms, when count S——, younger than she by several years, became deeply in love with her, and made every exertion to become acquainted with her family. But when about to proceed on a visit to the castle of Z——, to demand the hand of the object of his burning passion in marriage, he met Gabrielle, Angelika's sister. This incident deranged all his feelings and suddenly changed all his projects. Angelika, from that moment, lost all the charms which she had at first appeared to possess in his eyes, and Gabrielle became endowed with all that her sister had formerly attained. It was Gabrielle who was asked in marriage, instead of Angelika. The poor forsaken sister did not complain; her pride made her look upon her position very complacently.

"It is not," said she to herself, "this young coxcomb who leaves me, but it is I who have no further use for him."

She had, nevertheless, suddenly ceased showing herself in company, and she was only rarely met with in the most sombre and least frequented parts of her father's park.

One day the servants of Z—— castle had given chase to a band of Bohemian robbers, who for some time had desolated the country by pillage and conflagration; they brought back with them to the castle a cart, to which they had carefully tied their prisoners. Amongst the faces of these bandits, the most remarkable physiognomy was that of a lean and decrepid old woman, muffled up rather than dressed in scarlet colored rags, and who, standing up on the cart, imperiously cried out that she wanted to get down. The bonds that restrained her were loosed, and she was allowed to descend.— Count Z——, informed of the capture that had been made, left his apartment, and was busied in having the castle vaults prepared to serve as a prison for the marauders that fate had thrown into his power, when the countess Angelika suddenly rushed into the castle court, her hair in disorder, and, fall in at his feet, implored with tears in her eyes for mercy to the Bohemians, and, drawing a dagger from her bosom, declared that she would immediately kill herself if the least harm came to these poor people, whom she declared innocent of all crime.

"Bravo, my beauty," cried out the old woman; "I knew that you would be a sure advocate for us!"

And when Angelika, exhausted by this explosion of energy, had fallen fainting, the old woman, breaking the cords that still held her, threw herself on the ground by her side, and lavished upon her the most careful attentions. She drew from her basket a flask filled with liquid in which there appeared to be a gold fish swimming; and as soon as this flask was placed upon Angelika's bosom, the beautiful girl opened her eyes, sprang up with a bound as if a new life was circulating in her veins, and, after having closely embraced the old Bohemian woman, she dragged her precipitately into the castle. Count Z——, who had been joined by his wife and his daughter Gabrielle, contemplated this strange scene with a surprise that closely resembled fear. The Bohemians had remained unmoved. They were closely confined in the subterranean vaults of the castle.

The following day, a court of justice was called, and the Bohemians, conducted into their presence, were subjected to a severe trial, after which count Z—— himself loudly declared that he believed them innocent of all mischief and

robbery committed on his domains. They were set at liberty, and passports were granted to them to continue their journey. As for the old woman in scarlet rags, she had disappeared without disclosing which way she was going. All reflected, and formed a thousand conjectures to explain count Z——'s conduct. It was said that the Bohemian chief had had a long interview with the count, in which extraordinary revelations were mutually exchanged.

Meanwhile Gabrielle's marriage was about to be solemnized. The evening before the day fixed for the ceremony, Angelika loaded a carriage with all that she possessed, and left the castle, accompanied in her flight by a single woman whom it was said much resembled the old Bohemian. Count Z——, to avoid the scandal, tried to give to this action a plausible motive, by making known that his daughter, afflicted by a marriage that excited her jealousy, had solicited from him the donation of a little house situated at W——, where she had declared that she wished to retire and end her days in the most complete isolation.

After the espousal, count S—— went with his young wife to D——, in a situation where, during a year, they enjoyed together the most perfect felicity; after which the count's health became suddenly enfeebled from some cause which they were unable to discover; an inward suffering seemed to waste away his existence; he refused all care, and his wife could not obtain from him a confession of the hidden disease with which he was languishing. Finally, after a long resistance, he yielded to the advice of his physician, who prescribed a change of scene. He went to Pisa. Gabrielle, who was near giving birth to a child, could not accompany him on this excursion. A short time after its birth, the little girl that she had brought into the world disappeared mysteriously, and without leaving any trace by which they could discover the author of its abduction. Her desolation was pitiable to behold, when, to increase her pain, a message arrived from her father, count Z——, which informed her that count S——, who was thought to be at Pisa, had just died at W——, in the little house to which Angelika had retired, and that Angelika had become frightfully demented, against which calamity the physicians declared that all science was powerless.

Poor Gabrielle went back to her father. One night as she was sadly reflecting on the double loss of her husband and child, she heard a sound as of some one sobbing. She listened; this feeble noise seemed to proceed from a neighboring apartment; she anxiously arose, took her night lamp, and

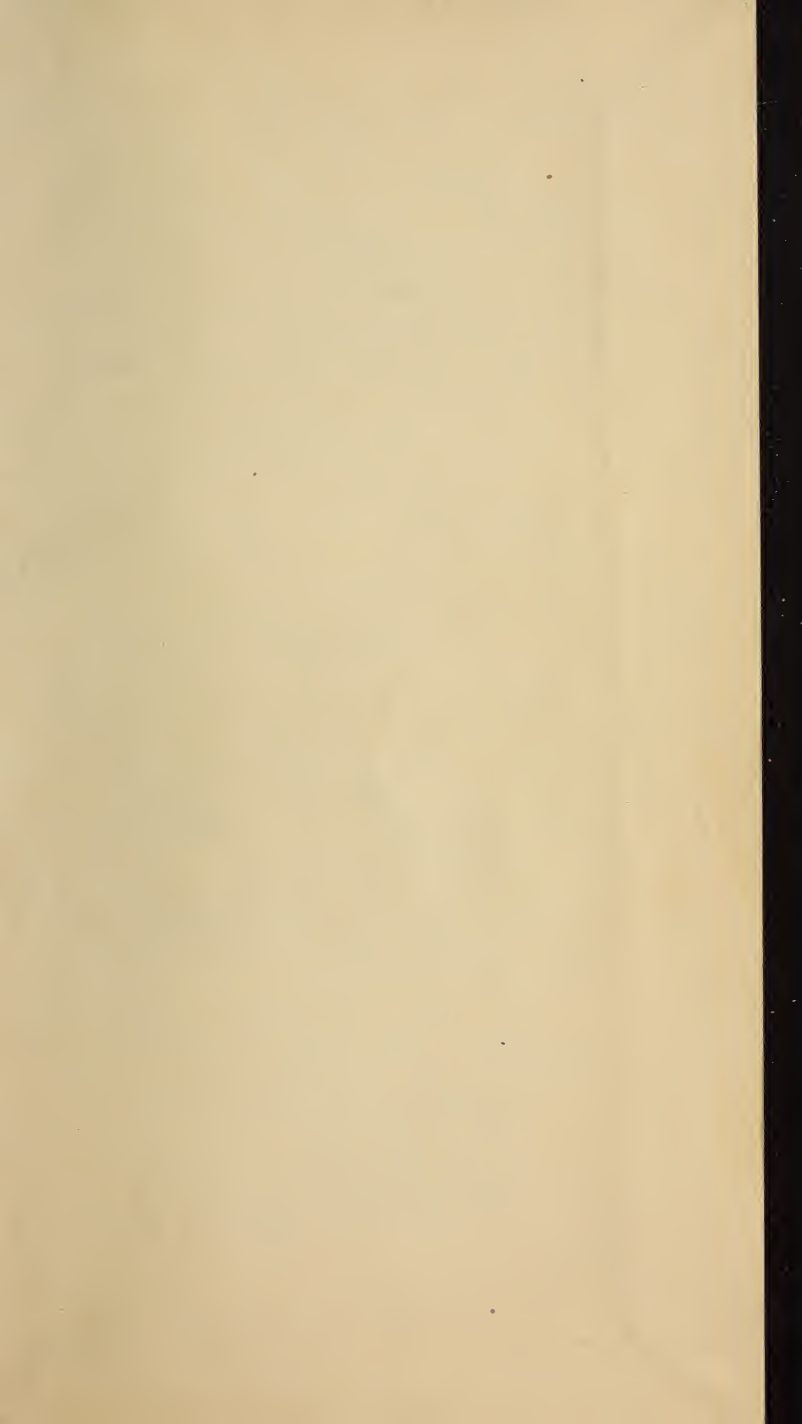
softly opened the door. Great heaven, what did she see!—The old Bohemian woman, dressed in scarlet rags, seated on the floor, her eyes fixed and glassy; a child is struggling in her arms, uttering uneasy cries. The countess Gabrielle immediately recognized her child; she sprang forward with irresistible energy, snatched the child from the old woman, who tried to resist her; but this violence exhausted her remaining strength, and she fell heavily to rise no more. The countess uttered cries of fear; the servants are aroused, and all hasten to the scene, but there no longer remains anything but a corpse to be consigned to the earth. Count Z—— went to the little house in W—— to question Angelika concerning the child that had been lost and found again. In the presence of her father, the poor mad woman seems to recover her reason for awhile; but the disease soon regains its empire; Angelika again raves, her features become deformed and bear an odious resemblance to the face of the old Bohemian woman. She weeps, she sobs; then with frenzied accents and savage voice, she orders the attendants to withdraw and leave her alone.

The unfortunate father gives out to the world that the mad woman is shut up in one of his castles; but the truth is that Angelika would not leave her retreat. She still inhabits alone the little house to which count S—— came to die by her side. The secret of what passed at last between these two beings remained unknown.

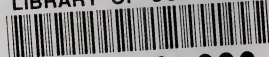
Count Z—— is dead. Gabrielle came to W—— with Edwine, to make some family arrangements. As for the recluse of the deserted house, she is left to the care of a brutal old servant who has become a maniac through madness and savageness.

Dr. K—— finished his recital by saying that my unexpected presence in the deserted house had produced on the bewildered senses of Angelika a crisis, the result of which might establish an equilibrium in her faculties. For the rest, the deliciously beautiful image that I had seen reflected in my pocket mirror was that of Edwine, who at the time of my curious contemplation was visiting Angelika's asylum. A few days after these events that had nearly deranged my brain, a feeling of deepest sadness obliged me to quit for a time my residence in W——. This strange influence was not entirely dissipated until after the death of the mad woman of the deserted house.

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